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WHERE THE TWAIN MEET

Photo by] [*A. Duperty & Son, Jamaica.*

A Mountain Scene.

[*Frontispiece.*

WHERE THE TWAIN MEET

BY MARY GAUNT

Author of "Alone in West Africa," "A Woman in China," "A Broken Journey," "The Uncounted Cost," etc.

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TO

MY FRIEND

MRS LANG

I gratefully dedicate this book.

My Dear Elsie,

I wonder if you remember as vividly as I do the very drastic criticism of a book of mine that first introduced us to each other. My publisher showed it to me with some hesitation because it was so scathing, but it went right to the point. Most of the book was scrapped there and then, and my literary education was begun under your care. It was you indeed who taught me that I needed educating in my art. That is twelve years ago, and I have never since let a book go into the world till it has received your approval. I am afraid I have sometimes tried you severely, but it has always been my ambition to be your prize pupil. I owe more than I can say to my sympathetic teacher.

It is a small thing to offer my latest book to you, but I hope you will accept it with my love and warmest thanks.

Affectionately yours,

MARY GAUNT.

Sainte Agnes, France.
8th September 1921.

PREFACE

SPAIN first set foot in the Western World, and if the discovery brought great wealth it brought also much individual suffering and bitter hardship. In Jamaica, she found no people living in barbaric splendour, no stores of gold and silver and precious stones, only a lovely land, fruitful and fertile, valuable only to her because she did not dare let another nation settle so close to the rich possessions of which she was mistress. But the other nations of Europe were naturally anxious to share in the rich spoil of the West, and if Britain took Jamaica and held her, it was only I think because she could not take Cuba and Hispaniola. The Spaniards fought for every inch of the island before they lost it, and now for remembrance of them there remains but a few place names and legends of the treasure they left stored there.

If colonisation was difficult for the Spaniards it was still more difficult for the British, coming from the cold North. No one was eager to brave the dangers of the tropics, and like the king in the parable, desiring to fill his tables for the feast, Government sought in the highways and byways for a population, and they imported white bondsmen and women, virtually a slave population, the first

shadow that was to impede the progress of the land. Labour was branded. The men worked—and died—in the fields, and the women became the mistresses of the young planters, so that marriage went out of fashion, and the free women were neglected and forlorn.

And when they ceased to send the white bondsmen, they sought a substitute in the black man from Africa.

The man who comes out to a new land is apt always to see the land he leaves behind through a softening veil that enhances its desirability. He sees only its good points. And naturally this emphasises the drawbacks of the new land. He speaks disparagingly of it, he writes home disparagingly, dwelling on his many hardships. Jamaica was no exception to the almost universal rule. Most men went there to make their fortunes, with every intention of returning to spend them. Only Hans Sloane, a wise and far-seeing man, saw the glory of the land, and left behind him a record of its wealth and its beauty and fertility. Lady Nugent, writing more than one hundred years later, was much more swayed by public opinion, and saw what she was told she would see, a deadly climate where men died like flies, though even she does arrive at the poignant fact that the women who lived with less licence, bore this climate far better than their mates.

From her pen, too, we first have some pity for the unfortunates the British imported from the Guinea Coast to work in their plantations. Terrible are the stories told of the sufferings of this alien

people from the moment they fell into the hands of the slavers till they stood in the slave markets at Kingston or Montego Bay, told calmly, told coldly, told simply as facts by men who saw only the difficulties of the trade, and of dealing with men and women who "wilfully" drowned themselves to escape their fate. On arrival, the stronger like cattle were sold in the open market, but only here and there do we get awful glimpses of the fate that befell the weaker.

Life was no bed of roses for the planter and his white assistants, working to provide funds to be spent in the old country, but it was simply a hell at first for the savages they worked.

On the plantations no white woman was welcome. As the masters had taken the white bondswoman for their temporary companions, so now they took the black while they were young and comely. At first it was savages and white masters, and the little coloured children who were but their fathers' chattels.

So slowly the people progressed, we hardly realise there was any progress, till we see the men and women of dark complexion clothed and ardent church members, even though they are slaves, and we remember how short a while before they started here as naked savages. Two generations were worlds apart. Cruel rebellion there was, crueller retaliation, but still white and black advanced to better things in the land that was becoming the loved home.

The years rolled on. First the trade was for-

bidden, then the slave was freed, then the black man was given equal rights with the white, and now— Now there are still difficulties, difficulties born of ignorance, of poverty, but so there are in the upward march of every people under the sun. Sometimes they make great strides onwards, sometimes they seem to pause and fall back, but really always the march is upwards, though we can only see the progress by looking back.

An enchanting tale, a tale of rare adventure and romance is the past of Jamaica, and before her lies a glorious future, for the Empire is slowly awakening to the value of the tropical possessions that are within the borders, and this fruitful island of wood and mountain and water, set in a summer sea, must surely play a great part in the future development of one of the great nations of the earth.

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WHERE THE TWAIN MEET

CHAPTER I

BRITAIN'S FIRST TROPICAL COLONY

When first I took passage to Jamaica it seemed as if purest chance were sending me there. But I begin to believe there is no such thing as chance, for when I remembered that Jamaica was an old slave colony I realised that this last coincidence was but the culmination of a curious series that have guided my steps through long years.

No one in my youth that I ever heard of wanted to go to West Africa, and yet from the time I was twelve years old I had an intense desire to go there, without the faintest hope of its being gratified.

As a young girl I came home to England and stayed with friends in Liverpool, shipowners, whose people had been African traders for hundreds of years, and African traders one hundred and twenty years ago certainly meant slave traders, for the slave trade was a "very genteel trade." I pored over the models of the factories they had on the West Coast of Africa, and the pictures of their ships in the Oil Rivers, and voiced my great desire to go there, a desire that amused them very much, for they who could have gone any day would not have dreamt of taking the trouble. They had estates in Jamaica too, had had them for many years, and I found on a shelf an old slave account book from that island

which meant so little to them that they jotted down on the blank pages the number of eggs their hens laid. How I wished I could see the place whither those slaves from Africa had gone, but Africa and Jamaica were far away in those days.

I went back to Australia, married and settled down, and then being widowed came to England again to make my way in the literary world, and the first spare money I had, it was £225, I remember, I realised my childish dreams and took passage for the West Coast of Africa. I was so interested, found it so well worth while, that I went again to the land to which no man wanted to go, the land that was known as the "White Man's Grave." Why I should have taken so keen an interest in the land where the slave trade was born, why I should later have gone to a slave colony, I cannot imagine, but I did, and the result has been a curious light on past and present, a linking up of those old days with the future that lies ahead of Jamaica.

Perhaps in a former life I too was a slave, or perhaps I was one of those careless folk who lived in one of the death-traps they called Castles on the Guinea Coast, and something in me made me wish to see them again, and having seen them, something certainly stronger than myself made me finish with Jamaica, the lovely island where Britain, though she does not seem to know it, is experimenting in negro rule.

Yes, surely, some haunting memory of a past life has shaped my career.

And this is how it came about. I was ill and had to go to a warm climate, and as the War had disturbed shipping I could get passage nowhere except to Jamaica. And safe on board the *Camito*, steaming down the Welsh Coast with the tang of the

salt sea breeze in my nostrils, it flashed across me that here at last when I least expected it had come my great chance. Into my hands had been put the opportunity, if I could but use it, to complete a half-finished task. I was indeed going to find out the end of the story that had thrilled my childish years, for this island set in a tropical sea is indissolubly bound up with the Castles on the Guinea Coast. From the swamps at the mouths of the Niger and the Gambia, from the surf-beaten Gold and Ivory and Slave Coasts had come the lumbering little square ships that took to the New World the dark people of the Old, hundreds and thousands of them, and in Jamaica there had grown up under the British Crown a people apart. Call it coincidence if you like, but to me it will always seem that a Greater Power guided my unwilling feet into the ways that brought me in touch with the things I most wanted to know.

And sailing west on that comfortable ship, where ice, beef-tea, fruit, cakes, or any other desired luxury came at a word to the steward, where a question to the captain or one of the officers discovered for me in exactly what part of the world we were, it was impossible not to think of the first man who had dared those seas. The Genoese navigator had come sailing west under the Spanish flag, and he had come slowly, slowly, where we steamed fast. They were only just beginning to believe the world was round in those days, and doubtless many of the sailors shipped for the voyage were ignorant men, not knowing whither they were bound. And their leader felt his way dubiously where we were quite certain of our going. On and on they went into the unknown. How unknown we can hardly conceive nowadays, any more than we can conceive

of the dangers they faced. Think of it. There were fish which could swallow a ship, crew and all, there was the "Flying Dutchman," portent of death, there were mermaids and syrens to lure them to destruction, there were enchantments of all sorts, in addition to the ordinary perils of the sea, and then of course—supposing the world wasn't round! Suppose they arrived at the place where the water gathered itself together and poured in one mighty waterfall right off the earth into space and nothingness! I am sure as the days went on the crews must have discussed the matter, have talked among themselves of the terrible dangers they were facing, have gone every night and morning to pray before the Virgin and Child on the poop, and at last they came to declare how worse than foolish was Columbus not to turn back when day after day showed still only a blue waste of waters.

And if they had gone over that tremendous waterfall I am sure there would have been those among the crew who would have declared at the supreme moment that they knew it would be so, they had always known it would be so. Had Pedro not met a pig on the way to the ship, had the black cat not died before they reached Madeira, and surely the Admiral should have turned back when the wind shifted so that he saw the new moon for the first time through the glass of the cabin port!

But at last—what a long last it must have seemed to those first voyagers who had dared to leave the coasts—they saw sea-weed and land birds, and at last, at last—not the terrible waterfall they had feared but land, land, land such as they had left behind them. What a moment it must have been for the great mariner! We passed that land, that island. There must linger round it still, I think, some of the wild

delight that filled the hearts of the explorers, for still men point it out, "The first land Columbus saw!"

We came into sight of Jamaica in the late afternoon and sailed along the south coast as the shadows were falling. A well-wooded country we saw, as its first discoverer must have seen more than four hundred years before, a land of steep mountains and deep valleys, with here and there patches of vivid green that, those who knew, told us were the sugar plantations that were the gold mines of Jamaica in the sugar boom. And the mists rose up from the valleys, and the shadows grew deeper and the day died in a glory of red and gold, a sight so common that no one takes note of it; and the night with a sky of velvet, embroidered with diamonds, crystal clear, came sweeping down upon us—a cloak of darkness—as we steamed into Kingston Harbour.

Columbus did not land in Jamaica on his first voyage, but he undoubtedly saw it, as we saw it, many and many a time. The memory of him was with me still as we landed. What to me were the comforts of the Myrtle Bank Hotel set right in Kingston, or of the Constant Spring out at the foot of the mountains? No, that is ungrateful. As an old traveller, no one can appreciate better than I the comforts of a good hotel. But as I dreamt on a comfortable steamer, so I dreamt more vividly of the past on the verandah of the Myrtle Bank, looking down the palm avenue to the sea. The night air was heavy with spicy scents, and the fireflies wheeled and danced, living lights in the dark shadows under the greenery, all the voluptuousness of the tropics was here in this land of romance which Columbus found for Spain, and that later was the first great tropical possession of Britain. But Jamaica has been an unlucky land, and I doubt whether Britain

has yet realised its value. It might be called the land of lost opportunities, so often have those who governed it let its good things pass by. I doubt whether Spain herself got any great good from this new possession; certainly Columbus found small peace here. With "his people dismayed and downhearted, almost all his anchors lost and his vessels bored as full of holes as a honeycomb, driven by opposing winds and currents, he put into Puerto Bueno, in the parish of Saint Ann's. But not finding sufficient food or water" (probably water, as it is now known as Dry Harbour), "he sailed east again and put into a cove since known as Don Cristopher's Cove." His ships were mere wrecks, those brave castled ships that had sailed from Spain with such high hopes, and it was very certain that whatever might happen to them, back to Spain they could not go. It was a terrible situation, an awful strait in which those brave mariners found themselves over four hundred years ago.

"You must see the parish of St Ann," said a Jamaican lady to me; "it is all green grass and white Indian cattle, and dark green pimento trees."

In those days there was probably not much green grass, natural grasses grow roughly and in tufts, and there were no Indian cattle; but the dark green pimento trees were there, their fragrance and that of many a tropical flower and tree must have been brought by the land breeze to the sailors in the ships. For Columbus sank his unseaworthy, worm-riddled ships in the harbour, sank them till the water came right up to their decks, a sign of the desperateness of his position, for no leader if he had any hope of redeeming the situation would have sunk the only means he had of returning to his own land.

Think of it. The ships were aground within

[Face page 9.

Photo by] [*Cleary & Elliott.*

ON THE WAY TO ST ANN'S BAY.

In a Cove like this Columbus beached his ships.

a bow-shot of the shore. I don't know how far that is, but certainly too far to swim easily in a tropical sea, they were sunk side by side and were placed in the "best possible state of defence," which probably means that every cooling current of air, the pleasant pungent sea breeze in the morning, and the aromatic land breeze in the evening were shut out. It must have had its effect upon the crews this lack of fresh air, though probably they were not greatly concerned about it. They very likely considered as men did long after their time that the land breeze was dangerous and that the sea breeze gave them ague, and I expect they looked out over the shimmering sea and hated it with a bitter hatred and blamed pitilessly the man who brought them there.

And yet in all the world I have not seen a more lovely sea than the sea that rings Jamaica. Sometimes the wind blows it into ripples, sometimes a stronger wind beats it into white foam, the clouds gather, it grows dark, inky black, and the rain comes beating down, rain that must have swirled across the decks and threatened to swamp out the little ships—their prison. But oftenest, I know, that sea was still, lovely, with the shallows like great jewelled opals of tenderest translucent green in a setting of sparkling sapphires and pearls, and entrancing little coves fringed by mangroves where the coconut palms stand up tall and stately as near the water as they can get, and all this against a background of mountains wooded to their very peaks, makes a scene never to be forgotten. There were no coconut palms in the time of Columbus. They came from the mainland, a right royal gift of the Spaniards to the island they made their own, but there were the sea grapes, great straggling bushes with big

round leaves and bunches of purple berries so like grapes that it is not till you taste them you find by their slightly acrid savour and the big stone in the middle that they are not. Still, to men after a voyage at the beginning of the sixteenth century, in the days of our King Henry VII., those sea grapes must have been a godsend, they and the luscious naseberries, which are sweet and sickly, but good to counteract scurvy.

I can't like the naseberry. The tree it grows on is large and handsome, but the fruit itself, which is about the size of a russet apple, cannot be eaten ripe from the tree because it is full of a whitish astringent juice, but must be kept like the medlar till it is well on its way to rottenness and then it may be eaten with a spoon. Probably Columbus's men ate hundreds of them, grumbling that they had come out to find gold and silver, and their leader had brought them to a watery prison where they had to subsist on fish which they grew to loathe, cassava bread and naseberries, occasionally traded by the Indians, sea grapes gathered by themselves—poor substitutes for the wheaten bread and peaches and grapes of their own land.

Day after day, day after day, they looked out on that sea where there was never a sail. They were apparently cut off from all hopes of home, and their leader lay in his cabin crippled with gout. And then the despised food began to give out.

In his despair Columbus sent out the first exploring expedition into Jamaica. Diego Mendez, one of the best and bravest of his officers, and three men, started to walk through Trelawny, St James, and Hanover, visiting the villages and interviewing the native chiefs and making treaties with them by which the forlorn company were to receive regular

supplies of food in exchange for fish hooks, knives, beads, combs, and such trifles as all the world over have taken the fancy of primitive man.

I have been through these parishes—in a motor car. There are coconut walks there now, the tall and graceful palms standing out against the sky, sugar plantations, patches of vivid green, pimento groves with trees like great myrtles clothed in glossy dark green, and rows of broad-leaved bananas and plantains, and the air is fragrant with the scent of orange and lemon blossom and hundreds of other growing things. On the hill tops are the Great Houses of the pen keepers and planters set in gardens, with the overseers' and book-keepers' houses lower down, and as near the road as they can get, the shacks of the negro helpers and independent cultivators. Strangely enough, in a little island that has been settled by Europeans for over four hundred years, the roads that wander along the entrancing sea shore and by the mountain side often look into gullies, at the bottom of which it seems as if we might find the villages where Diego Mendez made treaties. I should hardly have been surprised if in one of the little lonely coves we had come across the sunken ships of Columbus fastened close together for safety and with little houses thatched over in bow and stern. There are wild places still in this island which, after all, is only 4207 square miles—of hillside—not much larger than a good sized station in Australia, and gullies waiting for man to come and turn to good account their wealth. Here is room, and more than room, for the dwellers in the great cities who have never seen a glorious sunset and know not the scent of a pimento grove.

That meant for Columbus a weary time of waiting among dissatisfied men, for what adventurer,

who had come out seeking gold and silver and precious stones, would be content to lie sweltering—rotting, I expect they called it—even in the most beautiful cove in the world. Presently the story went round that Columbus had been banished, his prestige was gone, and two brothers named Porras rose as leaders of the mutineers.

Even the life of the veteran was in danger. As I write this on my verandah, looking out over the blue Caribbean, with a little pauperised tingting bird sitting on the rail calling aloud that I have always provided his breakfast and that even little slim black birds with bright yellow eyes can be led astray by too much ease and comfort, I seem to realise with what bitterness the iron entered into the soul of the old man. There was no actual danger, they had enough to eat, and could sleep, sheltered and in peace, and sooner or later he thought help would come. Patience, he preached, patience. But the mutineers would have their way. They built or stole ten canoes and went out along the coast, ravaging and pillaging. The first of the pirates who ravaged the coasts of Jamaica and their victims, were not the white people but the gentle brown folk whom Columbus had designed to make peacefully their slaves. "They wandered from village to village," says his chronicler, "a dissolute and lawless gang, supporting themselves by fair means or foul, according as they met with kindness or hostility, and passing like a pestilence through the land."

I can almost understand it and forgive. Almost anything was better than sitting still watching the sun climb over the mountain in the morning and sink into the sea in the evening, waiting, waiting, waiting, for the relief that was so long in coming.

For Mendez having got to Hispaniola had then to make his way to Spain, and it was not till the 28th June 1504 that relief ships came sailing in and Columbus was able to leave Jamaica. He died in 1506, and by way of recompense, I suppose, in 1508 his son Diego was appointed Governor of the Indies, and in 1509 went out to San Domingo, taking with him his wife, who was a cousin of King Ferdinand.

In *Jamaica under the Spaniards*, a translation by Frank Cundall and Joseph Pieterez of documents found in the archives of Seville in Spain, the curious may read the slow story of the Spanish settling of Jamaica and its gradual evacuation. They did not come in with a rush, for there was no fabulous wealth of gold and silver here. Again and again the Spanish King urges the Governors to seek for gold, but though doubtless they sought diligently, for the finding would have been the making of them, they found none, and we cannot but feel that the Spanish colonists were poor and of but little account. If you read Hans Sloane on the remains he found round about the old city of Seville, your sense of romance is satisfied, but the cold facts taken from the archives of Seville in Spain speak of a little handful of poor people struggling with an exuberant nature. Here, as I write, there comes to me the smell of very poor tobacco, only fragrant in the open air, and looking up I see a negro woman in leisurely fashion digging up the weeds among the grass of what will, some day I hope, be a lawn under the coconut palms. How leisurely is that fashion I can hardly describe, save by mentioning she only gets 3s. 6d. a week, boards and lodges herself and works accordingly. She has bare feet, a nondescript, drab-coloured garment that calls itself

a dress, and a ragged hat made out of a banana trash and bound with a string of bright red. She is of African descent, but not unlike her probably were the Indians who worked in the fields for those first Jamaican colonists. Yes, she is content, fairly content I should say, almost too content, or she would strive a little to better herself.

I should like to have seen the beginnings of the Spanish occupation of Jamaica. How they slowly set up their *hatos* round the island, choosing out the fertile river bottoms and fencing in their lands lightly, so lightly that soon the lonely parts of the island were overrun with wild cattle and pigs descended from those that escaped. They planted coconut palms and brought over oranges and lemons and limes from their native land which took root and flourished, so that Hans Sloane, writing thirty years after the Spaniards had been driven out, talks of the orange and lime walks, and nowadays if you want orange trees on your land you have only to throw out one or two rotten oranges to have a crop of young seedlings.

"The buildings of the Spaniards," says Hans Sloane, "on this island were usually one Story high, having a Porch, a Parlour, and at each end a Room with small ones behind for Closets etc. They built with Posts put deep into the ground, on the sides their Houses were plaistered up with Clay on Reeds, or made of the split Trunes of Cabbage Trees nail'd close to one another and covered with Tiles or Palmetto Thatch. The Lowness as well as the fixing the Posts deep in the Earth was for fear their Houses should be ruin'd by Earthquakes, as well as for Coolness."

Immediately they settled, the Spaniards rounded-up the luckless Indians. Their lot was hard enough,

though possibly not as hard as that of those driven to work in the mines, and as labourers on the *hatos* they soon began to fail their masters. Perhaps that is not to be wondered at. Las Casas, the benevolent bishop, who is responsible for the first introduction of negro slaves into the New World says, "they hanged the unfortunates by thirteens in honour of the thirteen apostles. I have beheld them throw the Indian infants to their dogs; I have seen five caciques burnt alive; I have heard the Spaniards borrow the limb of an human being to feed their dogs and next day return a quarter to the lender."

It seems a gruesome enough story, and where the mercy came in from Las Casas' point of view in substituting negroes for the Indians I do not know, especially as they say the negroes were infinitely inferior to the Indians, and as long as the Spaniards could get the latter they preferred them.

But that the Spaniards destroyed all the Indians there is no doubt. They were a mild and indolent brown people, very like those now to be seen in British Guiana, but historians differ as to their numbers: one man says that "in Jamaica and the adjacent islands within less than twenty years the Spaniards destroyed more than 1,200,000," but later researches have brought the figure in Jamaica down to about 60,000, a much more likely number, and after all quite enough to destroy in twenty years.

They lived, these Spanish conquerors, on the island for over one hundred and fifty years, a poor little company, or so I gather, but rich in the fruits of the earth. And the people at home took a fatherly interest in them. If an emigrant left his wife at home, he had to have her written consent to his going and give security that he would return for her within three years. And this security was

evidently very necessary, for among the archives at Seville there is a note touching a lady of Ciudad Rodrigo complaining to the Queen in 1533 that her husband had deserted her twenty-five years before to go to the Indies and had married another lady in Jamaica, where he was settled. But though the Queen ordered that the matter should be looked into and justice done, there is no end to the story.

Though we talk about the Spanish towns in Jamaica, they were really very small. In July 1534 there were but eighty citizens in the town of Seville, and of these soon after only twenty remained, the others having died of "diseases and pestilences"! And we are told that in twenty years they had not reared ten infants, a pitiful return. In the first record we get of Spanish Town, it had only one hundred inhabitants. In 1597 a Governor named Fernando Melgarejo de Cordova came out for six years. He brought with him by permission four servants, jewels to the value of 200 ducats (roughly worth £40), a black slave, four swords, four daggers, and four of each kind of other arms, and his salary was 300,000 maravedis, which sounds a great deal, but as a maravedi was equal to half a farthing he only had £156 a year, surely a small sum even for those times when money was worth so much more, and Jamaica, too, as his advisers were never tired of impressing on the King of Spain, was a valuable colony, and if it fell into the hands of the King's enemies none of the other colonies would be safe.

When Melgarejo arrived, he found the Englishman Sir Anthony Shirley had sacked and held to ransom the Villa de la Vega, the city of the plains, the capital, guided thereto by a native Indian, and proud as we are of our old-time mariners, still the times

were rough and merciless, their ways matched the times, and we may pity the people who waked up that hot August morning in 1597 to find that their hereditary enemies the English were upon them. Sir Anthony Shirley claimed that while he was in Jamaica he was "absolute master of the whole," and he seems to have made arrangements for his return with the comfortable conviction that he could certainly provision his ships with beef and cassava, to say nothing of the cooling fruits which by this time were plentiful and must have been of inestimable value to these wanderers upon the seas.

Sir Anthony Shirley was only one of many. For these corsairs who soon came to Jamaica regularly were drawn from all the nations of Europe and "they rob and they trade," wrote the worried Governor.

And when they didn't trade and they didn't rob they helped themselves not only to wood and water but to beef and pork, that was running wild it is true, but naturally the Spaniards considered it theirs, and then sometimes, when they had raided a little too often, the tables were turned and they left their bones there.

Don Fernando goes at length into his prowess in going out in a boat to defend a frigate—a frigate was a very small ship in those days—that two English launches had boarded and he says he retook that frigate and made them retire. More, he sent Captain Sebastian Gonzalez—there is a swagger in his name—with troops by land to Port Negrillo, there "to wait till the Captain of the English corsair should go to obtain water and capture him; and they lay in wait for him and killed those who landed and brought back their ears, broke the jars to pieces and burnt the boat."

And so the story of Jamaica goes on in the Seville archives, a tale of a small people with stocks of horses and cattle and pigs, a tale of struggles to build churches, and to hold the island, because though no gold or silver had been found, it was yet too central to allow any other nation to settle there.

But it rose in value, for the next Governor, Alonzo de Miranda, had his salary increased to close on £400 a year. He was much worried by a Portuguese corsair named Mota, who "with two launches and a tender was going along the whole coast sacking and plundering the ranches and seizing the inhabitants and doing many other injuries, to remedy which I was obliged to assemble a fleet by sea, and go myself by land with soldiers to defeat the design of the enemies and they went away from the coast. With all that, I have had information that in the remote cattle hunting places they land, and with some of the cow catchers who have run away from Espanola, whom they bring, they dress hides and supply themselves with meat." This, he goes on to say, "cannot be remedied without much cost and expense."

When first I went to Jamaica, a friend, Mr Clarence Lopez, with kindness I can never forget, lent me a house in the northern part of the island in the parish of Trelawny. It was the Great House on the Hyde, a pen about eight miles as the crow flies from the sea. Jamaica is 144 miles long at the longest portion and 49 miles broad at the broadest, it is little more than half the size of Wales, but when I went to that house set on the side of a mountain with a glorious view of hill and valley, coco-palm and banana, I went to the very loneliest place I have ever lived in in my life, and I have been in many lands. It is one of the loveliest too. Behind are the mountains, clothed to their peaks in woodland,

bound together with all manner of creeping vines and the mountains fling their arms round, so that they seem to guard the old house from the winds of the south, and all in the ground grow pimento and orange and lemon trees, handsome, broad-leaved bread-fruit and tall naseberry trees, while the little garden on a plateau just behind the house is a wilderness of roses, pink and white, and red and yellow, and fragrant as the first roses that ever grew in a Persian garden. The house is two storied, and though it has many annexes the main building stands by itself. Much money has been expended upon it. Two great flights of stone steps lead up to the porch at the front door, the floor of which is tessellated as carefully as if it had been done in Italy; all the handles of the doors are of heavy cut glass and so are the door plates, while gilded beading decorates what they call in Jamaica the two great halls, that is the dining room downstairs and its fellow upstairs. The floors are of polished mahogany and so is the staircase; but no one had lived in it for years and "Ichabod" was written over everything.

It had been built with a view to defence, there was no doubt about it. On the porch a couple of men with guns could hold the front of the house, in the hall there is a trap-door leading to the storey below, cellars half underground, and in the walls in front are loop-holes through which a man might easily shoot. The second storey overhangs the first a little and there is not a corner but could easily be held by a man with a gun. Yes, decidedly it was built for defence, such defence as might be needed in the end of the eighteenth or beginning of the nineteenth centuries. The first night we spent there, my companion, Eva Parsons, and I alone with the weird black servants who had seen but very few

white people and whose ways were strange to us, we felt the loneliness keenly. Eva was ill, and she was a Londoner born and bred. There were rats racing about downstairs, there were bats making curious sounds in the roof, and when a potoo bird gave vent to its long drawn-out uncanny cry, Eva abandoned courage and came flying into my room. And she was no coward. I comforted her to the best of my ability, and we decided that until we got the house a little more habitable one bedroom was quite big enough for the two of us.

But what must it have been like on those ranches in the old days when the Spaniards were few and scattered, and the corsairs, English and Portuguese and French and Dutch, and a nondescript crowd that were worse than any, came cruising along the coasts and landed and attacked the lonely houses? Think of the women who lay still shivering or crept to each other's rooms and wondered was that the pirates or was it only a rat, or possibly a bat in the roof? Or that weird sound?—Was it a potoo bird killing rats? or was it an English sailor calling to his mate in his harsh, unknown tongue?

"Except in the principal one, Caguya," says Sedeno de Albornoz, speaking of the corsairs, "they anchor in the ports without being disturbed by anyone, and refit and careen their ships with perfect ease as if in their country. I can certify that, while a prisoner of theirs, I have heard with much concern many conversations with regard to colonising this island and fortifying two ports, one on the north side and one on the south. I always told them that there was a garrison of ten companies of infantry stationed by the King our master, besides three in the town, and two of mounted mulattoes and free negroes armed with hocking knives and half moons, of whom

they are much afraid. They did not like that reply, and though doubtful contradicted me, saying they knew very well what was in the island. It is very certain that it is more important to them than any other, as it is better and more fertile and abundant than all those they have settled in the Indies; nor is there another like it in the Indies. Cuba and Espanola are indeed much larger, but Jamaica in its entirety is more plentiful than these, for it has much horned stock, and herds of tame swine, and wild ones in great numbers, from the hunting of which every year is obtained a quantity of lard that serves instead of oil for cooking." So much lard that there are people who declare that Montego Bay, from which much lard was exported, took its name from a corruption of the Spanish word for lard.

"Likewise," goes on Sedeno, "there is a large number of good horses, donkeys, and mules, fisheries of turtle and dainty fish, and a very fine climate from its healthy airs and waters." Indeed he cannot say enough for the island. He finishes, "there are now a little over 300 colonists, mostly poor people. Nearly 450 men bear arms," so I suppose he only counts those as colonists who actually settled on the land, "including the hunters and country folks, all of whom are labouring people, strong and suitable for war by reason of their courageous spirits if indeed lacking military discipline."

And even as he wrote the enemy was within the gates, and the Governor of Jamaica writes despairingly to the King of Spain. He says 53 ships of war—there were really 38—came in sight of the island, and they bore 15,000 seamen and soldiers, while the invaders claim they conquered with 7000 soldiers and a sea regiment of 1000. But he probably is right when he says "there are 8000 souls scattered

about the mountains, children, women, and slaves, without any hope of protection except from God, with the enemy's knife every hour at their throats." We hear so little about the women and children in these wars of conquest and yet on them most heavily of all must have pressed the difficulties and the dangers.

And the Governor died a prisoner of war, and finally this Governorship which never seems to have been much sought after and was worth nothing, now descended upon Christoval Arnaldo Ysassi, who was not even a trained soldier.

The rest of the pitiful story is one of flight, flight, flight, the Spaniards always pressed northward, always begging and praying help from Cuba, begging for bread and getting a stone.

For we say Jamaica was conquered in 1655, but it takes a long while for a people who are holding a land by guerilla warfare to understand that they are beaten, and it was evident that Ysassi was heartened by many a skirmish that seemed to him a success. Towards the end of October 1656, however, we find the King of Spain writing—"The English have a foothold in Jamaica, obstructing the commerce of all the islands to windward with the coasts of the mainland and of New Spain. The fleets and galleons run great risk in passing by Jamaica."

But even in March of the next year the Viceroy of Mexico writes to Ysassi congratulating him on his appointment to the Government of Jamaica, though he himself was beginning to realise what a hollow farce it was.

However he made it unpleasant for the arrogant invaders. "I now send a smart English sergeant," he writes, "who will give your Excellency lengthy news of the whole state of the island." Poor English

sergeant, smart even in his captivity! I hope they did not make things very hard for him in Mexico. That is the worst of history. The ultimate fate of the pawns is never told, only in these state papers there is that one entry that pictures for us the upright young figure with the keen blue eyes and firm set mouth, firm even in misfortune. God rest his soul! and God bless him for keeping up the honour of the English nation.

Even when reliefs did come, they brought little comfort to the harassed Governor. In August 1657, two captains landed at Ochos Rios, not far from where Columbus spent his weary year. They were supposed to help the Spanish Governor but, as soldiers, they pointed out to him the hopelessness of the situation. They said he could not succeed in the interior, that "it will cost some trouble to capture any horses from the enemy, and with infantry the risk is manifest." I have seen the country and I can't imagine how they thought to use horses.

But in spite of these Job's comforters, Ysassi kept writing bravely to the Viceroy that he was harrying the enemy, that still they could not get any good from the *hatos* that they held.

"Those who come to get beef, die without anyone being left to carry the news . . ." What a picture of bloodthirsty, merciless war it gives us! When the great golden moon sends her light streaming through the coconut walks, and the glorious night is heavy with the scent of the orange flowers and the pimento groves, I cannot but think of those bloody days in the seventeenth century when the English drove the Spaniards to the remote corners of the island, and the Spaniards in their turn killed remorselessly, so that none should go back to tell the tale.

Again he reports in the middle of September,

"I sallied out upon the road to encounter them with the few troops I had, which were about 80 men" (Oh, for the might of Spain!) "because the others are without shoes and not accustomed to the discomforts of the open country."

He descants on their ragged condition. "The few soldiers I have are naked and barefoot and cannot stand the mosquitoes" (I sympathise with them)—"Please help them." He has not even paper to write his reports and the whole history is punctuated with prayers for provisions, "for soldiers will fight badly if they have nothing to eat and are badly clothed. I assure your Excellency that some die reduced to sticks."

It was evidently a prolonged series of skirmishes, with sometimes one party conquering, sometimes the other, but the Spaniards seem to have thought their re-establishment was merely a matter of time. Once they gave their minds to the matter they must win, and meanwhile Ysassi was doing useful work holding the place till the good time came. They could not believe they had lost Jamaica.

"For the love of God," he prays the Governor of Cuba, "I again ask you to send me not linen, or a new shirt, because I do not make use of it" (a gallant of Spain!) "but some old cloth."

But brave Ysassi was nearing the end. In July 1658 he had reinforcements from Mexico but is obliged to write sadly—"In fine, sir, on this 26th June the enemy defeated me with the loss of 300 men although his loss, so far as troops are concerned, was greater." (The pitiful pride!) "If they beat me," he says in effect, "me starving, short of ammunition, provisions, everything that might enable me to make good, at least I have given them something better than they gave me."

And so he sends the remnant of his army into the mountains to forage for themselves and he speaks of the negro slaves, the first mention we have of the Maroons that have figured so largely in Jamaican history.

"The negroes, Sir," he writes to his King, "who have remained fugitives from their masters who have abandoned the island and your Majesty's arms, are more than two hundred, but many have died, and I inform your Majesty so that you may command what is most suitable to your Royal Service to whoever may come to govern the island. I have not done a small thing in conserving them, keeping them under my obedience, when they have been sought after with papers from the enemy. I have promised their Chiefs freedom in your Majesty's name but have not given it until I receive an order for it." As if his gift of freedom could have mattered very much to the negroes, who already had the freedom of the hills and the hunted Spaniards much at their mercy.

And here again we are faced with contradictions that make me glad it is not my business to write history.

"The Spaniards in their authority over their slaves," writes the very verbose Bridges, "appear to have been restrained by no law whatever; but were sanctioned in every act which could extort their labour or secure their obedience, so long however as the strength of the native Indians withstood the execrable cruelties of their Castilian taskmasters, the negroes were considered as very inferior workmen. Ovando complained of their continued importation to Hispaniola, where he found them but idle labourers, who took every opportunity of escaping into the woods, and assisting the natives in their feeble

attempts to throw off the Spanish yoke. But as Indian life wasted, negro labour became necessary to supply its place."

And yet after that he goes on to say: "The British conquerors profited but little by the negroes whom they found in the island of Jamaica, and whose services were inseparable from the hard fate of their expatriated owners. . . . Not five hundred slaves were employed in the cultivation containing more than two million acres of the richest land. The degeneracy of their masters had reduced all classes to nearly an equality; so that in fact slavery hardly existed in Jamaica. Poverty had for a series of years forbidden a further importation of Africans; the negro race had rapidly decayed, and the few that were left were employed to supply the wants of the indolent Spaniards in Saint Jago, by the cultivation of their *hatos* in the country, and were preserved with the greatest care and cherished as their own children. . . . The easy condition of the slaves was manifested in their attachment to the fallen fortunes of their masters; and they were confidently left by them to retain possession of an island which they could no longer keep themselves." Surely a curious way to end a paragraph which began by declaiming against the unbridled cruelty of the Spaniards. So they were not all cruel, and even troubled Ysassi felt sure that the runaway negroes would prefer the Spanish rule to the English. Perhaps there was something in the devil they knew.

In Spain the enquiries into the state of the country appear to have been endless. It was easier to hold the north side of the island, the fleeing Spaniards wrote them, and one man tells how his hunting slaves were enabled to help the unfortunates who had abandoned their *hatos* on the south and

fled into the mountains in the north. I see those frightened women and children, toiling along through the mountain passes, perhaps taking it in turns to ride a mule or donkey, afraid of the hunting slaves, savage men with little clothing and yet thankful for the meat and wild fruits they gave them. And they said that in the first three years they had killed nearly 2500 of the enemy's men, "while on our side very few were lost. The enemy also suffered from a pestilence from which more than 6000 died." And so they buoyed themselves up with false hopes. But whether they were killed or wounded or died of pestilence these persistent English came on and pushed them farther and farther towards the north. Even the mountains were no refuge, and we read how sick men, women and children, Spanish colonists and slaves, "embarked in one of his Majesty's smacks," that made several trips by order of the Governor of Cuba who charged (the wretch! to take such advantage of their desperate straits) "for each person removed from Jamaica, even infants, at the rate of ten and twelve pesos" (about thirty shillings). One family even paid him more than three times that, so evidently there were pickings attached to a Spanish Governorship.

And at last in February 1660 even brave Ysassi must have seen, and seen thankfully, I should think, that the end was approaching. He was defeated at Manegua (Moneague)—it is a pleasure resort up among the hills nowadays, where the tourists come from England and America—and at a Council of War the abandonment of the island was recommended.

Slowly, slowly, it had come to that, after all the hopes, all the sacrifices, all the fighting, all the long, long struggle and suffering, after nearly five years of it they must go. The English offered terms, but

the Spanish were proud and haggled, and though the English seem to have been more than kindly and courteous the Spaniards were loth to give in, and finally we find D'Oyley, the English Governor, writing "the time for capitulating has expired." The English would have sent them to Cuba, sent them with all honour, but the Spanish Governor, who had never been more than the shadow of a Governor of Jamaica, could not give in. He complains that the English only undertook to send away the Spaniards to Cuba, "as the greater part of the force were Indians, Negroes, and Mulattos, without counting Slaves and Coloured domestic servants. . . . I determined to die sooner than abandon or leave the meanest of those who had been with me . . . the troops," he goes on pathetically, he had advised the Governor of Cuba, "were very dejected and weak from want of food and eaten up with lice, for not even the Captains had more clothes than what they wore." So he decided to build two canoes and in fifteen days they were finished and provided with sails, "from some sheets belonging to the hunters who had escaped." We can see those canoes building, the careful watch that had to be kept lest the English should catch them, the subdued triumph when they were all complete, the despair when it was found they would only hold seventy-six people, and so, after all his protestations, "I was obliged to leave in the island thirty-six under the charge of one of the Captains who was assisting me."

And they call the cove where he embarked Runaway Bay. It is a misnomer, and a slur on the memory of a brave man. Surely no man ever turned his back on the enemy more reluctantly.

They came in safety to Cuba and no mention is ever made of the thirty-six left behind and the

captain who stayed with them. I like to think that Ysassi sent for them when he could.

The road that runs right round the island passes close to that little bay now, and the waters of the blue Caribbean, calm and still, mirror the blue skies above as they did on that long ago May day when the last Spanish Governor of Jamaica embarked in a frail canoe and waving his hand to those he left behind set sail for Cuba to the north. This was the end of the high adventure. The very end! The Spanish rule was over, the valued island that lay right in the fairway of commerce — it lies so still—was lost for ever to the Spanish Crown and its last Governor was going away a broken and discredited man.

And bitterly the Spaniards regretted the loss. Pedro de Bayoha, "Governor of the City of Cuba," wrote to the King setting forth its many advantages, "any fleet however large can lie and careen its ships, and any army can march, as food is very plentiful and the island abounding in tame and wild cattle as well as swine, the quantity of which is so great that every year twenty thousand head are killed for the lard and fat and no use is made of the meat." So we gather that Ysassi was not very good at the commissariat. Perhaps the English harried him too much.

It has been said with some surprise that there are few relics of the Spaniards in the island. For me, I marvel that there is after all these years still so much. The oranges and the limes, the pomegranates and the coconut palms are a monument to them, and still at Montego Bay is to be seen the outlines of a dark stone fort that overlooked the beautiful bay and guarded the town. And though Indian corn has been sown in the court-

yards for many a long day, some of the old cannon that belonged to his Spanish Majesty still lie about. The climate of Jamaica is against the preservation of relics of the past. "'Tis a very strange thing," says Hans Sloane, accustomed to the slow growth of Northern climes, "to see in how short a time a plantation formerly clear of trees and shrubs will grow foul, which comes from two causes; the one not stubbing up the roots, whence arise young sprouts, and the other the fertility of the soil. The settlements and plantations of not only the Indians but even the Spaniards being quite overgrown with tall trees, so that there is no footsteps of such a thing left were it not for the old palisadoes, buildings, orange walks, etc., which show plainly the formerly cleared places where plantations have been." And Sloane, who was physician to the Duke of Albemarle, the Governor, writes of 1688, not thirty years after the last Spanish Governor had fled.

Even now in Jamaica there are tales of buried treasure. In 1916 the "Busha" or superintendent of an estate in Westmoreland was engaged in pulling down a stout stone wall, evidently built in the old days by slave labour. Each stone was well and truly laid, and tradition said the wall was Spanish. One of the workmen said he had come to a hollow place. And sure enough there was a large jar stuffed full of old Spanish gold and silver coins, hidden I suppose when the Spanish owner of the *hato* fled before the incoming of the English. Tradition says there are many more, but within the last year or two the Crown, I hear, has insisted on its right of treasure trove, so that it is exceedingly unlikely anyone finding such will proclaim the fact aloud. The Spanish colonists it is true were but a poor people, but even the poorest have need of

some little money, and in the days when banks were not much in vogue, cash that would not go into the breeches pocket had to be kept somewhere.

Bridges tells how "a miniature figure of pure gold representing a Spanish soldier with a matchlock in his hand was lately found in the woods of the parish of Manchester. How it came there remains a mystery; for those extensive forests bear no marks of having ever been opened, or even penetrated until lately." And Bridges wrote about 1828.

But gold is not to be lightly worn or washed away. I can imagine the young Spanish wife who owned that little golden soldier and counted him a very precious possession. And so, when she fled with her baby in her arms and her little daughter clinging to her skirts, she carried it with her. And then came the day when the English pressed them hard, and perhaps her husband, perhaps the head slave, called to her to hurry, they must get away, and the baby cried because she had so little to give it, and the little maid whimpered when she fell among the leafy thorns and rough stones on the steep mountain path, and her mother bending over to comfort her dropped the little golden Spanish soldier that was her treasure from her bundle and never knew of her loss till it was too late to go back to look for it, and there he lay for close on one hundred and sixty years till some Englishman found him and reported the find to verbose, moralising, Bridges.

The author of *Old St James* too tells a tale of Spanish treasure. He says that sometime in the eighteenth century two Spaniards visited "Success," an estate in the north of the island not far from the sea-shore. They showed a plan said to have been copied from one held by a Spanish family locating

the position of valuable documents buried upon the estate. There were the remains of an old fort, and using the walls as a starting-post the point fixed upon was the centre of the estate's mill-house. Not unnaturally, the visitors wanted to take down the mill-house, undertaking to rebuild it and leave everything as they found it. But the owners objected, perhaps also not unnaturally, for the mill-house was the most important part of the estate and an owner who would live in any tumble-down makeshift himself would often spend large sums upon his mill-house and machinery. Permission was refused, though tradition was with the Spaniards. For all I know those papers may be there still. The mill was one of the last to use cattle as power, and when excavations were being made for the new steam mill, two wells were found, one with water and the other in which water had obviously not been found. It was filled with soil of a different character from that surrounding it. "The water," says the author, "was evidently that which supplied the fort and it is natural to think that valuables or other papers might have been buried in the other."

There is still among the older people a certain faith in enchanted jars buried in the earth or left in caves by the Spaniards when they fled the country. In the Rio Cobre there is a table of gold which rises up at noon every day, but though it has been seen by more than one person no one yet has succeeded in getting it before it sinks back under the waters. This, I am credibly informed—you may believe it or not as you please—is because the Spaniards killed a slave to watch over the treasure and no one has been quick enough to throw their hat, knife, or handkerchief over it and so break the enchantment.

There was a poor slave woman once who was

ill and unable to finish her task, so the driver made her stay behind and do what she had left undone. She worked all night, and weary and worn, the task was not yet done when her hoe struck something that gave out a jingling sound. She looked carefully and found a Spanish jar, and with such important information dared even approach the high and mighty master himself. On going to inspect, he found so large a jar it had to be pulled out by oxen and was full to the top with golden doubloons. So he rewarded the woman with her freedom and gave her enough to live on all her life. At least that is the story that was told to me. It is a comfort to read of Spanish Gold which for so long has stood in my mind for fanciful treasure, really materialising to some one's advantage.

More especially in the north of the island is this faith in hidden treasure strong. I was told seriously by a young man once that just beyond Montego Bay some very handsome brass cannon were dug up and so curiously wrought were they that they were polished and set up close to where they were found on the shore. But they did not stay there long. One night a Spanish sloop was seen off the coast, next morning she was gone, so were the guns, and no one knows what has become of them.

They tell much the same story about a great jar of gold which was supposed to have been buried in a cane piece in St Thomas. One night the Spaniards came, gagged and bound the watchman—I did not know every cane piece had a watchman, but so the story runs—and dug up the jar leaving a sum of money for the watchman and the hole so that the owners of that field might have some idea of what they had missed.

I am afraid these two last stories are purely

apocryphal, but many people believe in them and they serve to show how fixed in Jamaica is the faith in Spanish Gold.

At Kempshot, on top of a high hill, Miss Maxwell Hall two or three years ago was roused night after night by the tramping of feet along the hillside. At first the noise was a mystery of the night then it ceased, but a week or two later she found that some great caves on the estate had been entered and extensive digging had gone on. It was impossible that anything could have been found, for the Maxwell Halls themselves had dug out those caves thoroughly searching not for Spanish treasure but for Arawak remains. It was evident that a large company had gone there nightly. The place had an evil reputation and she knew that not two or three men would have lightly dared its dangers even for promise of gold, and broken and discarded rum bottles showed how the investigators had been bucked up with "Dutch courage."

A little treasure will go a long way in making stories, and one jar of coin found will supply material for a dozen. But it is interesting to think that if you buy a plot of land in Jamaica, especially in the north, you *may* just chance to buy with it a jar of gold.

CHAPTER II

THE WHITE BONDSMEN

In this year of Our Lord, 1922, there are still people who regard Jamaica as a far, far distant country, and when it was conquered in 1660 it must have been farther from the British Isles than any spot now on this earth. Indeed, few people would know where it was and fewer still cared. But some — the wise ones, the Great Protector among them, rejoiced over this new possession. It seemed as if the wild tales the seamen told of adventure on the Spanish Main were now put into concrete form. Spain had drawn great wealth from these new lands; was some of that great wealth to come to the northern isle?

But the beginning was very difficult.

Here was an island, a beautiful island truly, but a rugged and heavily timbered land, a fertile land, but the mountains so entrancing and so inaccessible, were full of dangers, known and unknown. And the known were deadly. The Spaniards still lurked in their leafy depths, and even when they left they encouraged their abandoned slaves to keep up the feud, and no man could stray from the armed shelter of his comrades without risking death, often a painful and cruel death.

Among the English themselves it was not all peace, because they were unhappily divided into Roundheads and Cavaliers, fanatics and men of

license if we take extremes, and the two parties again and again were at each other's throats.

And even if there had not been two parties, the soldier as a colonist was a dead failure. He did not want to try and develop the land that fell to his lot. He was an adventurer, a fine adventurer often, but on the whole more given to destruction than to the building up of a colony. What the first settlers looked to find was literally gold and silver, pearls, and precious stones. They felt their work was done when they had conquered the land. They thought they had a right to sit down and reap the harvest of their labour.

And of course there wasn't any harvest. That wealth lay hidden in the soil they did not and could not understand. Indeed they did not want to understand. For if the land was to produce they must labour, labour under a tropical sun and under conditions that to them were strange. And even if they did labour to get results, there must be a market and as yet there was no market. All they could hope for was to get enough to keep themselves alive. Added to this, their pay was in arrears.

No money, a climate that because they were unaccustomed to it they regarded as pestilential, and idle hands, no wonder these conquerors of Jamaica were discontented, no wonder they roamed through the savannahs slaying ruthlessly the cattle and horses than ran wild in what seemed to the newcomers countless numbers. And so presently it happened that the cattle that had amply supplied the buccaneers for many decades were all slain and the men who had declined to plant were starving. They did not want to settle on the land. They wanted a little more excitement in their lives. In the end, I think, the average inhabitant of Jamaica had plenty of that commodity.

To this boiling pot Cromwell sent out 1000 Irish men and 1000 Irish women. I can find nothing but the bare notification that they arrived, and it hardly seems to me those 2000 Irish can have helped matters much, whether they were poor convicts or political prisoners.

Somebody must till the ground, that was clear; and there came along Luke Stokes, the Governor of Nevis, intrigued by the stories of the new conquest; he brought with him 1600 people, men, women, children, and slaves, to settle in the eastern part of the colony round Port Morant on the site of an old Spanish *hato*. The Jamaican Government hoped much from these new importations.

Nevis is a tiny mountain island only fifty square miles in extent, and the people who came from there came to work and were accustomed to the isolation that is the lot of the pioneer. They settled in a part fertile certainly, with a wonderful and amazing fertility, but where the rainfall was very heavy and the heat far greater than in little Nevis, where the sea breeze swept every corner. There were mosquitoes too in the swamps, and a number of those settlers died, men, women, children, and slaves. Governor Stokes had hardly built himself a house when he and his wife died. If it was lonely in Nevis, ringed by the eternal sea, it was lonelier far in Port Morant, Jamaica, with the swamps around and the mountains, beautiful but stern and inaccessible, frowning down upon them.

We know very little about those first comers, but we do know that after the first decimating sickness that fell upon them, the remainder held on and tried to make good.

There were in 1671, the historian Long tells us, sixty settlements in the Port Morant district.

Probably we should read for the word "settlements" "estates," either pens or sugar estates. Now to people who do not understand conditions in Jamaica that sounds quite thickly populated. But Jamaica is all hills and valleys—rather I should say, steep precipices and deep ravines—and, as I cannot say too often, especially in that district the vegetation is dense. A mile in Jamaica, it often seemed to me, is farther than ten in England, much farther than a hundred in Australia. Even now many pens, many sugar estates are cut off entirely from neighbours. I lived for three months a guest of hospitable Miss Maxwell Hall, at her house Kempshot, on top of a steep mountain, from which we could see literally hundreds of hills melting away into the dim distance. We could see Montego Bay 1800 feet below us, but no other habitation of a white man was in sight, and we were so cut off by the inaccessibility of the country that though my hostess is certainly one of the most charming and popular young women in the countryside, no one from the town ever made their way up that steep hill. They were content that she who knew the road should come down and see them when she had the time.

When we talk about the colonising of Jamaica, I think we ought to take into consideration the isolation that was of necessity the lot of almost every colonist.

And I think we may count these men from Nevis the very first agriculturists who did make good, and find a living in the soil of an island that is certainly one of the assets of the Empire. I am lost in admiration of these pioneers. They lived to themselves, they were entirely dependent upon themselves. Were they sick? They must see things through, die, or get well. As the crow flies, help might be near

enough, but the steep mountain paths were cut by impassable torrents or blocked by dense vegetation. Their slaves might rise—probably they did—for slavery either for the white man or the black is not conducive to contentment, and they had to face it and bring them to a sense of their wrongdoing without outside aid. And then there was that other danger from the corsairs or pirates who swept the seas and made descents upon the lonely plantations, looking for meat, or rum, sometimes for women, and always for any trifles in gold or silver or jewels that might be picked up, and they were as ruthless as a Sinn Feiner in their methods. No wonder the houses were built stern and strong with thick walls loop-holed for defence. They might reckon on the slaves to help them here, for the slaves would not have much to hope for if they fell into the hands of the pirates. A slave's lot was probably hard enough anyway, but I think it was perhaps better to belong to a settler, to whom his services were of value, than to a pirate who evidently in those days counted a man's life about on a par with that of a beetle. They must have been a narrow, capable, self-centred people those settlers who came from Nevis and made good at Port Morant.

Cromwell was very anxious that the island should be peopled and both he and Charles II. gave patents for land freely, and though there does not seem to have been much competition for these patents, still some men did come and were planted over the colony.

The need of the island, of course, was women. Some of the old Spanish settlers gave in their submission and they probably had daughters and young sisters to be wooed by the rough English soldiery. I don't know if any of those who took out patents

married in this way. Probably they did, especially in the north, but sometimes they brought their wives from the Old Country.

At Little River in 1670 the lands were surveyed by Richard and Mary Rutledge, and other people took to themselves parcels of land there, varying in size from 50 to 200 acres. It is a rich country, this island that the Spaniards held so long, with rivers running down from the wooded mountains and in the rich river-bottoms almost any tropical plant will grow. The farther I went to the north-west the more fertile I found the country, and at Lucea, Lucea with the lovely little harbour well sheltered from storms, they grow yams, yams that are a byword in a land that will always grow yams. All along the road by the sea, that lovely road, came creaking great carts drawn by oxen—yes, even in these days of motors, bullock drays driven by shouting black drivers, piled high with Lucea yams. Yam, I may interpolate, is a valuable foodstuff. I want butter and milk to it, but the natives, the Creole descendants of the slaves, eat it with coconut oil. The food values of the yam and the potato—the Irish potato, as they quaintly call it in Jamaica—are probably about the same, but you get a great deal more for your money in a yam. It is *the* food of the common people, while the potato is a luxury. A black man once brought me, as a Christmas present, a cardboard box neatly tied up with pink ribbon, and in it wrapped up in white tissue paper were four "Irish" potatoes! But even potatoes will grow in this goodly land—what will not grow here—I believe they cannot raise primroses—and yet these early settlers were not a success.

"In the second generation," says the author of *Old St James*, "they had all died out or gone, and the only memorials were the graves."

They used to say in those days, and indeed long after, that unless the population were recruited from the Old Country every white would have gone in seven years. We may take that statement for what it is worth. The Briton, wanderer as he is, has a fixed idea in his own mind that the only place where children can really be reared properly is in those islands in the North Atlantic that he himself quitted in his youth. Even so late as when I was a young woman, I have heard battles royal on the subject of the degeneration of Australia, and there were men from England who held, and held strongly, that Australia cut off from Britain for ten years would degenerate into the savagery of the people the English had found there at the first settlement! There was no stamina, said these ultra English, in young Australia, in young New Zealand; even the animals became degenerate. But behold, over Australia's plains range the largest flocks of sheep in the world with the very best wool (at least it fetches the highest prices in London), and at Gallipoli the stalwart sons of Anzac proved once for all that they too were Britons, worthy sons of the Empire whose flag they were upholding.

And so it is with Jamaica. Men can live, they can thrive there, but for the first comers, ingrained with British ideas, it was very hard indeed.

We talk about planters, but I fancy some of those first comers were accustomed to live very humbly and had very small intellectual attainments. Of course there were the men of standing and their wives, the men who stood round the Governor, but the men who took out the patents for small parcels of land and lived on their land were probably hardly the equals of the Council School educated labourer of to-day. The only difference would be—and of

course it is a tremendous difference—those planters, however small their educational attainments, were accustomed to look upon themselves as the salt of the earth.

Each and all had slaves, and the gulf between the slave and his owner was so wide and so deep that there was no bridging it. It remains to-day in the colour question that is for ever cropping up, and it made one class arrogant as it made the other cringingly submissive.

"If an average planter of 1720," says *Planter's Punch*, "and his wife and daughters could be brought back to life and could live for a day now as they lived in times long passed, and if we could witness their manners and have a glimpse of their daily customs, it is little to say that we should be inexpressibly shocked. . . . There is a planter's house of the first century of colonisation still standing in St Elizabeth, but there are scarce a dozen in the colony. It has a broad verandah in front, which you approach by a low flight of stone steps, the walls are from 2 to 3 feet thick, there are shutters for the windows, you see at once that the place was originally built for defence. It is of one storey only; there is no ceiling; so that the heavy rafters are exposed. It may contain in all some six apartments; it would not be disturbed by a hurricane, hardly by an earthquake, and it could have withstood for sometime an assault from slaves. . . . It was in houses of this sort that the country planter lived for a hundred years or more in those fabled 'good old times' of which we sometimes speak."

And these houses were naturally very plainly furnished. There were great mahogany beds, one probably even in the sitting-room if the posts happened to be well carved, there were mahogany

chairs and tables, perhaps a cupboard or great box or two, all made on the estate, for they all prided themselves upon having a carpenter. They had mattresses and quilts and of necessity mosquito curtains, but they had no pictures—the days of the pictorial calendar were not yet—and never a book, save perhaps the Family Bible, wherein to record the births and deaths of the family. If the house mistress were house proud, having as many servants as she pleased, she perhaps saw to it that her mahogany floors were kept in a high state of polish and the pieces of family silver brought from the Old Country and set out on the country-made side-board reflected the faces of its owners, but otherwise there was not much ornament.

The weather was hot, it was always hot to these men from England, and at first they wore their heavy English clothes, their long coats, their waist-coats, their breeches and heavy woollen stockings; and their hair too was long until they took to wearing wigs, which must have been worse. Well, of course, it was utterly out of the question that a man should go clad like that in a Jamaican August even when the rain came down in torrents and every leaf held a shower of water. He shed his clothes by degrees, and went about his house, where he was only seen by his women, often about his fields, where he was only seen by his slaves, who did not count, in thread stockings, linen drawers and vest, with a large handkerchief tied round his head. Out of doors he would wear a hat on top of this kerchief. Of course there were occasions when he graced some state function with his presence, or twice or thrice in his life on some very important occasion he may have felt impelled to attend church, and then he would adorn his head with a wig.

Then, too, he would blossom out into a silk coat and a vest trimmed with silver.

Lesley, speaking of his arrival in Jamaica in the beginning of the eighteenth century says, "the people seem all sickly, their complexion is muddy, their colour wan and their bodies meagre, they look like so many corpses and their dress resembles a shroud."

It must be remembered that yellow fever was rampant, and that not till the very end of the nineteenth century was the cause known. "However," he goes on to say, "they are frank and good-humoured and make the best of life they can. If Death is more busy in this place than in many others, his approach is nowhere received with a greater unconcernedness. They live well, enjoy their friends, drink heartily, make money, and are quite careless of futurity."

I suppose he meant the Future Life, that life beyond the Grave, of which we know nothing; but it seems to me it was the present that those past colonists played with so lightly. Many of the gentlemen were very fine and treated their inferiors —those with less of this world's goods—with a condescension that then was the admiration of their historian, but which nowadays would make us smile. One and all, it seems, however small reason they had for it, were very haughty and insisted upon being bowed down to. If a man wished to do business with them he might get much more favourable terms if he knew how to "apply to their humour; but they who are so unhappy as to mistake it, may look for business in another place."

It is very difficult for us to understand the feelings of the people of those times. Only after reading Mr and Mrs Hammond's books on Labour in England between 1760 and 1830, have I dimly

understood what the poor in those times suffered, what it was that filled the ships that brought bondsmen to the plantations in the West and later convicts to the colonies of the unknown South.

Meditate on this description of the upbringing of a boy in Jamaica and think what it was to trust men's lives in such hands.

"A boy till the age of seven or eight diverts himself with the negroes, acquires their broken way of talking, their manner of behaviour, and all the vices which these unthinking creatures can teach. Then perhaps he goes to school. But young Master must not be corrected. If he learns 'tis well, if not, it can't be helped. After a little knowledge of reading he goes to the dancing school and commences Beau, learns the common topics of discourse and visits and rakes with his equals. This is their method."

Here is a little bill presented at a first-rate tavern in Kingston in the year 1716 which throws a little light on the way in which one of these beaus dined. A bit, I may say, seems to have been about 7½d.

Dinner for one	5 Bits
Small beer	1 Bit
Bottle of ale	4 Bits
Quart of Rum punch . .	4 „
Coffee	1 „
Lodging	8 „
	23 Bits

The bill does not mention how the gentleman got to his bed, but I presume he was carried there, or maybe he slept undisturbed under the table for which they charged him "lodging."

In Lady Nugent's time, over eighty years later, she says: "I am not astonished at the general ill-health of the men in this country, for they really

eat like cormorants and drink like porpoises. . . . Almost every man of the party was drunk, even to a boy of fifteen or sixteen, who was obliged to be carried home. His father was very angry, but he had no right to be so as he set the example to him."

Surely there must be something very good in human nature, for we know there were fine men in past times. Evidently in spite of their upbringing.

Life for the women was little better. If Madam could read and write it was as much as she could do. Whatever might have been the opinion of society in the Elizabethan era, undoubtedly, until but quite a few years ago, a learned woman was looked upon askance, and a gentleman—how the word is going out of use—ever feared that he might be thought to be in any way connected with trade. Even I can remember my grandmother saying to me that no gentleman wished to write a clear hand lest people should think he had been a clerk, and as for a woman very little reading and writing was good enough for her. Reading she regarded as "waste of time" for a woman, and my grandmother was born in the end of the eighteenth century and died an old, old woman in the last quarter of the nineteenth. She prided herself—with justice—on her courtly manners, and like one of Jane Austen's heroines, was a lady of leisure, never did I see her doing anything. She must have worked, for she was a poor woman and her house was nicely kept, but it would have been derogatory to allow even her granddaughter to see her sweeping or dusting, or cooking or washing up the crockery. I fear the ladies of the planters and their daughters had less education than even my grandmother would have thought necessary and the courtly manners were left out.

If young Master made free with the better-looking negro wenches, or, as time went on, with the mulattoes and quadroons, it made life exceedingly dull for his sisters and his neighbours' sisters. Nay, more, it absolutely ruined their lives, and it was a cross they must bear with a smile, pretend indeed that it was a thing to which they never gave a thought. Yet these girls were brought up to think that marriage was the be-all and end-all of a woman's life. It was, of course. Nowadays, when most careers are open to her, it is hard on a girl if she may not have the hope of marrying, and she may marry any time between twenty and forty. But if she does not marry, she may still have an important place in the world. Then if she did not marry young she was at once counted a nonentity, she had little chance of marrying at all, her life must needs be empty and she had no standing in the world.

And maturity comes so quickly in the tropics. Her time was so woefully short. Shorter than it was in the Old Country, and it was short enough there. "She had passed her first bloom," writes Jane Austen on one occasion—and she meant it always—"she was nearly twenty." If she had not a beau by the time she was sixteen, or were not married by eighteen or nineteen, a girl was branded as a failure, and I think there must have been many heart-burnings among the white women of Jamaica in these long ago days. The twentieth century has given women better fortune, taken away the bitterness that is the portion of the woman who, being as it were on show, is passed by as worthless.

But in the early days, because work was the portion of the slave, the lady must needs sit with idle hands. The long hot hours were interminable.

She lounged about in a loose white garment, bare-headed, barefooted, she did absolutely nothing from morning to night. The slaves brought in food, highly-spiced food, to tempt a languid appetite, and she ate it on the floor, because so it was considered more appetising; if she felt amiable she asked the slaves to share, if not, a blow or many stripes was their portion. Only when there was a chance of meeting a young man, or at least an unmarried man, did she give time and attention to her toilet and lay herself out to please. By reason of her training or lack of it, she had nothing in common with that man but thoughts of passion or pleasure. Of pleasure she might speak, though pleasure taken without work behind it, shared or understood, is very unmeaning; of passion she was supposed to know not even the meaning of the word. She must, so she thought, appear utterly ignorant on most subjects. Many and many a time a girl put on her fine clothes, tried first this colour and then that, curled her hair and powdered her face, put a touch of rouge here and a patch there, pinned down a ribbon or fluffed out a bow and went out with a sigh and a smile and ogled and coquetted as might any more fortunate dame at Bath or Tunbridge Wells.

And she hoped—for what? That perhaps at last she might find favour in some young buck's eyes, and so be able to talk to her sisters and her friends, and above all to her brothers, as if it were she who were conferring the favour and this young man had fallen a victim to her charms. When he came awooing in earnest he likely had, for the odds were heavy against her. Marriage was out of fashion. The young planter did not wish to marry. It was an age of so-called

gallantry—of intrigue, and once the negro slaves were introduced, he formed connections with his own women slaves that gave him entire satisfaction.

How often I wonder did the girl take off the gown put on with such high hopes with a bitter sense of failure, a failure that might not ever be put into words, and all the bitterer for that. And the oftener she did it, and the fainter her hopes, the more dreary would be her feelings. Her own helplessness, her own uselessness, though she would not put it that way, made her hard on the luckless girl who waited on her, made her curtail her scanty liberty, beat her, or starve her ruthlessly.

But there were not always white women in a planter's household. Even now in Jamaica there is a proverb that says rudely that the two worst things on a pen are a goat and a white woman —that is what made these girls' chances so poor.

Of course I am describing extreme cases. There were girls who were wooed and won, as there were women, I expect, who never neglected their toilet even when they were alone. But considering the climate, it was not unnatural they should pass the day in a dressing-gown which has been described as a sort of nightgown wrapped round them. In all the world there are born slatterns, and I can easily imagine the women of those first settlers drifting into very easy-going ways. In my own household we two women wakened at dawn and stood on the porch in our nightgowns wondering what the new day would bring. A nightgown and loose hair and bare feet seemed the proper costume. It is not too cool when the fresh morning air plays around you, it is quite enough when the heat of the day is upon you. Jamaica calls for some loose and airy costume.

I have always been curious about the indentured white servants who were brought to the plantations in the West Indies and America to do the work of artisans and labourers, and I have been able to find little about them.

The first were evidently those Irish sent out by Cromwell. And after that beginning almost every ship brought its quota of servants, as they called them, in contradistinction to the slaves.

"Scarce a ship arrives," says Lesley, "but has passengers who design to settle, and servants for sale. This is a constant supply and a necessary one," meaning that they considered the white race must die out unless constantly renewed. Servants in those days were always aplenty. Sometimes these servants were convicts, sometimes they were only prisoners for debt, sometimes they were political prisoners, sometimes, I am afraid, they had been kidnapped, and sometimes like a well-known man, Sir William Morgan, they had sold themselves into slavery to get away from a life in England grown intolerable. That any men should have done so throws a sinister light on the life of many men in those times, for if the life of a negro slave was hard—and God knows it must have been—in no sense can it have approached the hardships of the lot of the white bondservant.

"Another ship brought in a multitude of half-starved creatures," writes Lesley on another occasion, "that seemed like so many skeletons. Misery appeared in their looks, and one might read the effects of sea tyranny by their wild and dejected countenances. 'Tis horrid to relate the barbarities they complained of. A word or a wrong look was constru'd a design to Mutiny, and Hunger, Handcuffs and the Cat o' Nine Tails was immediately the

punishment." True, he adds, "'tis only aboard a few vessels such cruelties are practised."

When they arrived, they were not landed at once; they must not leave the ship for at least ten days after she had entered the port. The master of the ship, merchant or importer of the white servants, had not the right to sell any before that time had elapsed under a penalty of £10 for every one so sold, and their keep was paid by the factor or seller. Why this was, I do not know. It might have been to give the most distant planters a chance to buy or it may have been in the interests of the servants themselves, so that any man who had been unlawfully smuggled aboard might have time in which to have his case investigated. Still, we may pity those poor bondsmen sweltering in their cramped quarters, but I suppose we may give the authorities credit for some little effort to do them justice.

Once they were landed their hard lot had begun, a path which often led straight to the grave.

There was always a shoal of buyers. Roystering Cavaliers and prim Roundheads crowded down to the ship and the servants passed before them and were examined, men and women, as if they had been so many horses or cattle. It must have been a bitter pill for the gentlemen of Monmouth's following, fallen from their high estate and passed from hand to hand by these men whom once they would have regarded as far below them, only fit to sit at table with their servants, and bitterer still must it have been for the women. And though there was competition for them you might buy a good artisan for £40, an ordinary labourer for £20, and I am afraid the higher rank a man had held in England the lower would be his value in Jamaica, at least before negro slaves became numerous.

Every servant had to serve according to contract, if there was no contract, for four years, but if he was under eighteen he had to serve seven years, and convicted felons, of course, for the time of their banishment. Fancy buying the services of a good carpenter for £10 a year and his keep! It must have been cheap even when money was worth so much more.

All authorities agree that these bondservants were cruelly ill-used. It was generally understood that while a man looked after his black slave, who was his for life, it was to his interest to get as much as he could out of his bondservant whose services were his only for a limited period. Thus it was that they were worked very hard indeed, so hard that often in sheer self-defence when the end of his time was approaching, a man would prevail upon his master to re-sell him for a further term of years to some other man. And often the servant died before the years were passed. I have found no record of what a woman brought, but I expect that Madam often commissioned her husband to bring her a quiet, middle-aged woman, not too good looking—though she probably didn't put it quite in those words—to tend the children and do the sewing. And the younger men, I expect, looked at the girls and suggested the propriety of a new waiting-maid to their fathers, or possibly, if they had houses of their own, bought them themselves. Oh, I can see bitter depths of degradation that lay in wait for some of those younger bondwomen.

One might think, considering how valuable was the worker, it would have been easy to escape and work as a free labourer. But the authorities had provided for that. At the expiration of his time his master had to give the servant £2 and a certificate of freedom, and whoever employed any free person

without a certificate from the last employer forfeited £10. Who then would take any risk when for so little more he could have a servant of right?

Each servant was to receive yearly three shirts, three pairs of drawers, three pairs of shoes, three pairs of stockings, and one hat or cap, little enough in a climate like Jamaica where the need is for plenty of clothes, washed often. The women were supplied proportionately. As a matter of fact the men often had no shoes, and were dressed, says Lesley, in a speckled shirt, a coarse Osnaburg frock (Osnaburg seems to have been a coarse sort of linen, something, I take it, like the dowlas of which we make kitchen towels), buttoned at the neck and wrists, and long trousers of the same, and they had bare feet unless they could contrive sandals. The women wore generally a striped Holland gown with a plain cloth wrapped about their heads, such as every negro maid wears nowadays.

There were regulations for their feeding too. By these, each servant was to have 4 lbs. of good flesh or good fish weekly, and such convenient plantation provisions as might be sufficient. Most plantations had a "mountain" attached where the slaves grew their provisions, the cattle were turned out to recruit, and hogs were raised, and in a country like Jamaica there should have been no difficulty in supplying plenty of meat. But practically, I am afraid, it was not often supplied, and the 4 lbs. of good flesh became Irish salt beef, which was admittedly very coarse, and as it had often been months on the way, was probably a great deal nastier than it sounds.

The poor bondsman found himself hemmed in by all manner of regulations. No one could trade with a servant—or slave for that matter—without the consent of the master on penalty of forfeiting treble

the value of the thing traded and £10 in addition. Human nature was frail, and if a freeman got a woman servant with child he had to pay £20 for the maintenance of the woman and child or serve the master double the time the woman was to serve. If he married her though, lucky woman, after he had paid that £20 she was free; if they married without the master's consent the man had to serve two years.

True, he had some privileges this luckless bond-servant. He could not be whipped on the naked back without the order of a justice of the peace under a penalty of £5; less, you see, than a man had to pay for trading with him without the consent of his master. And sometimes, of course, he was a favourite; Lesley says he has known servants to dine "on the same victuals as their master, wear as good clothes, be allowed a horse and a negro boy to attend them." But to me this only emphasises how much the unfortunate servant was dependent for his comfort, his happiness, his success in life, not upon his worth but upon the caprice of the fine gentleman who was his master. If he were "stupid or roguish" he was hardly used, often put in the stocks and beaten severely, and he got nothing to eat but the salt provisions and the ground food the law insisted he should have, and at the end of his four years naturally, if his master would not give him a character, nobody could be found to employ him. His lot was worse than that of the black slave, whom custom and public opinion decreed should not be cast off in his old age whatever his record.

How low was the status of a bond-servant is told by a chance remark of Lesley's, who says that Sir Henry Morgan was at first only a servant to a planter in Barbadoes, and "though that state of life be the meanest and most disgraceful, yet he caused

to be painted round his portrait a chain and pot-hooks, that marked the punishment to which he was like to be subjected in those days."

That little story made me change my opinion of Sir Henry Morgan. He climbed by piracy, and then he put down piracy with a high hand, hanging the less fortunate of his fellows. But since he was not too proud to be reminded of the lowly position from which he had sprung, there must have been reason in what he did.

The colony desired bond-servants or, more probably, white inhabitants. Any shipmaster importing fifty white servants was freed from port charges on the ship for that voyage, but they had, observe, to be male servants. They didn't think much of women in the days of gallantry.

And others were welcome besides servants. "All tradesmen and others not able to pay their passages, except Jews, cripples, and children under eleven years of age, willing to transport themselves to this island shall be received on board any ship, and were free from any servitude." The master received for anyone coming from England, £7, 10s.; from Ireland, £6; from New England, Carolina, and other parts of America, £3, 10s.; from Providence and the Windward Isles, £2. These sums were evidently paid to the shipowner through the master, for Lesley goes on to say that, for every person brought from Europe, the master "should have for his encouragement and to his own use the further sum of £1 per head, while those brought from America brought the master in 10s. ahead apiece." And evidently these willing emigrants were set to work at once, for all rogues and vagabonds and idle persons refusing to work were to be whipped on the naked back with thirty-nine lashes, when

presumably they took their place among the bond-servants.

It wasn't very easy to get out of this country that was so lavish with its invitations to come and settle. Every shipmaster had to give security of £1000 not to carry off any person without leave of the Governor, and anyone wishing to get leave had his name set up for twenty-one days, and had to bring a witness who had known him or her for at least a year. It was even difficult to hide, for if a servant or hired labourer hid another man's servant or slave, he forfeited one year's service to the master or had thirty-nine lashes on the bare back.

And that is all I can find about these unwilling immigrants. Not one person that ever I heard of owns to having descended from them, and what is more extraordinary still, tradition does not point at any man as having among his forebears one who so arrived in the colony. All trace of them is lost. Naturally, perhaps. No one owns to a convict grandfather or great grandfather, even if the conviction were only for knocking down a rabbit.

Still, in after years, no one would have been ashamed at having a follower of Monmouth for an ancestor. But I have heard of none such. If these bond-servants died they were forgotten, and if they made good, as some must have done, they were absorbed into the population.

As the black slaves became commoner the value of the white bondsmen was enhanced, for the slaves were always a menace, and there was a law by which every owner of slaves had to keep one white man, servant, overseer, or hired man, for the first five working slaves; for ten slaves, two whites, and two whites for every ten more, and these had to be resident on the plantation, so that these bondsmen

became either overseers or book-keepers, if they had not skill enough to be blacksmiths or carpenters. And then, I think, it was that the bondsman had his chance.

Book-keepers or artisans were not supposed, even when they were free men, to speak to the planter's daughter. Their social standing was by no means good enough, and it was a time when class differences were very marked.

But youth is youth, and if the girl had no hope of a lover among her own class, and indeed even if she had, I expect the good looking young bondsman was often encouraged by an arch look or a melting glance to a closer acquaintance. It ended—well in one way. She ran away with him, or possibly there was nowhere to run to, and a man cannot go far without money, so—the tropical nights are made for love-making. Presently, if the father and the mother were not wise, there was a scandal and some poor servant had ill-merited stripes.

But sometimes, I think, the planter was wise. Quite likely the bondsman, especially if he had been a political prisoner, was far better educated and better mannered than the girl running wild on the estate. Some provision would be made for the young couple, the lad would get his freedom, and in some house a little more sequestered in the hills, they would start housekeeping with a cane patch and black servants of their own.

This is entirely my own idea. I can find no record whatever of such a marriage. All trace of the bond-servants has vanished as completely as though they had never been, but this is the way I interpret Lesley's remark, "At last for the most part run away with the most insignificant of their humble servants!"

But that lucky man was only one out of hundreds.

Many and many an unhappy being, I am afraid, crawled away from a servitude grown too hard, and died beneath the tangle of palms and tropical greenery among the mountains of Jamaica.

For they died prematurely—we know they died. Even the ruling class died like flies often before they had reached their prime, and each and all set down the abnormal death rate to the pestilential climate. Really Jamaica has a beautiful climate, but they did not understand in those days the danger of the mosquito, and they thought the night air was deadly. All classes drank, the masters "Madera" and rum, and the servants rum that was doubtless not of the best. It is easy to sneer, but human nature needs some relaxation, and living on beef that was like brine, sleeping all night in a room from which the night air was carefully excluded, the gorgeous divine night of Jamaica, and overworked in the burning sun, we can hardly blame these bondsmen for drinking. They watered the cane pieces with their sweat and blood, and they died—died—died! They were not even pioneers. They were simply bond-servants on whom no one wasted pity.

It seems to me that pity, that true pity which is not half-sister to contempt, but has eyes for suffering humanity, and the will to better things was hardly born among the majority till after the Great War. Now at last is the worker coming into his own, and if he wax fat and kick like the gentleman in Holy Writ, I think we must forgive him, for long has he served.

CHAPTER III

JAMAICA'S FIRST HISTORIAN

It is fascinating to read up the old books that have been written about Jamaica. Wearisome sometimes naturally, because for one illuminating remark you must wade through a mass of turgid stuff.

I confess even to having skipped occasionally Hans Sloane, and I read Hans Sloane—in the original edition with the long "s's"—sitting on the verandah of my house looking over the Caribbean Sea, and when I had finished I felt I had known him, so charming is he. I was sorry I could not write and thank him for his book. It is a very strange thing how personality creeps out in writing. No one surely ever talked less of himself than Hans Sloane, but we somehow get a picture of a kindly, interesting man, patient and tactful, whom it must have been a privilege to know, and he manages to give us a very clear picture of life in Jamaica little more than thirty years after the first landing of the English. He was Physician to the Duke of Albemarle and lived in Jamaica for a year, 1687-88, and he looked at the country he had come to with seeing eyes, and described thoughtfully what he saw.

"The Swine come home every night in several hundreds from feeding on the wild Fruit in the neighbouring Woods, on the third sound of a Conch Shell, when they are fed with some few ears of Indian

corn thrown in amongst them, and let out the next morning not to return till night, or that they heard the sound of the Shell. These sort of remote Plantations are very profitable to their Masters, not only in feeding their own Families, but in affording them many Swine to sell for the Market. It was not a small Diversion to me, to see the Swine in the Woods, on the first sound of the Shell, which is like that of a Trumpet, to lift up their Heads from the ground where they were feeding and prick up their Ears to hearken for the second which so soon as ever they heard, they would begin to make some movements homewards, but on the third Sound they would run with all their Speed to the Place where the Overseer us'd to throw them Corn. They are called home so every night, and also when such of them as are fit for Market are wanted; and seem to be as much, if not more, under Command and Discipline, than any Troops I ever saw.

"A Palenque is here a place for bringing up of Poultry, as Turkeys, which here much exceed the European and are very good and well tasted, Hens, Ducks, Muscovy Ducks and some very few Geese. . . . These Poultry are all fed on Indian, or Guinea Corn and Ants nests brought from the Woods which these Fowls pick up and destroy mightily."

This was written of 1687, but it is true now in this twentieth century. I have seen oranges and naseberries lying rotting under the trees in heaps and I know there is much waste land in Jamaica where it should be well worth someone's while to raise hogs and chickens and turkeys. Just behind where I am sitting writing, a bare two miles from the town of Montego Bay, there is a swamp which at present breeds nothing but large and fierce mosquitoes, but where hogs might live to their

advantage and the swamp's, and in these days of cold storage and world shortage I wonder why that swamp is not turned to good account. As for fowls and turkeys and ducks, they grow fat and heavy, they lay wonderfully, and if anyone gave a little attention to the poultry industry they should coin money. Guinea-fowl will feed themselves, and so will the pea-fowl, the bird that used to be considered — rightly — a dish for a royal banquet. And nowadays, instead of being taken to market on mule-back or on the heads of slaves, they would quite well pay for motor cartage.

I am sorry to say it seems to me this industry has rather retrograded since Sloane's day.

"The Cattle," he says, "are penn'd every night or else they in a short time run wild. These Pens are made of Palisadoes and are look'd after very carefully by the Planters. The Oxen who have been drawing in their Mills and are well fed on Sugar Cane tops are reckoned the best meat, if not too much wrought. They are likewise fatted by Scotch Grass."

They did escape many a time from these "Palisadoes" and so the woods of Jamaica proved very attractive hunting-grounds for the buccaneers. It is evident that pork and beef might be got here quite as easily as in the days of the Spaniards, and perhaps it was in return for this unwilling hospitality that these gentlemen brought much of their plunder to Port Royal, for Jamaica, in those first years, even before Sir Hans Sloane wandered about it, made money out of the corsairs. They were a difficult problem. Other days, other manners. They ravaged the coasts yet they brought wealth to the capital, and while some of them got themselves hanged for the blackguards they undoubtedly were, Sir Henry

Morgan, the successful English leader of the lot, was at one time Lieutenant-Governor of the island.

It was no wonder Jamaica attracted all sorts and conditions of adventurers, for the climate, if one remembers it lies within the tropics, is lovely. It is hot in the middle of the day and the sun has naturally great power, but there is from ten in the morning till four in the afternoon a cooling breeze off the sea, and at night it is reversed, the cool breeze comes from the land. Hans Sloane notices this, he also mentions what of course is of no consequence in these days of steamers, that no ship can come into harbour save in the middle of the day, and none can go out save in the early morning or at night. He kept a record of the weather all the time he was in the island, and that record for 1687-88 might have dòne almost word for word for 1919-20, so little does the climate vary. His memorandum for the 25th October 1688 might have stood for the 25th October 1920, when I read it, "Fair weather with a small sea breeze." And when the sea breeze has failed he has a note which I feelingly record is perfectly true, "Extream hot." Luckily the sea breeze seldom fails, and I suppose there is no place in the world where the climate suits everyone always. Sloane remarks that most people considered the land breeze at night unwholesome, "which," he says, with a wisdom beyond his time, "I do not believe," and even to-day I have met people who warned me gravely against the danger of sleeping outside. "The damp night wind is so dangerous!" and like Sloane I did not believe and I went on sleeping in the open and daily growing better and better.

As a physician, he had a great deal to say about the health of the people of the new Colony. Indeed,

reading him has made me understand how slowly and imperceptibly we throw off the old and take up the new. He dilates on the immorality of the people. Not that he worried about their souls as did later writers; he takes things as he finds them and does not expect men to be impossible—and dull—angels, but he writes wisely on the effect such conduct must have on the individual.

"The Passions of the Mind have very great power on Mankind here, especially Hysterical Women and Hypochondriacal Men. These cannot but have a great share in the cause of several Diseases, some of the People living here being in such Circumstances, as not to be able to live easily elsewhere: add to this that there are not wanting some, as everywhere else, who have been of bad Lives, whereby their minds are disturbed, and their Diseases, if not rendered Mortal, yet much worse to cure than those who have sedate Minds, and Clear Consciences. On the same account it is that those who have not their Wills, Minds, and Affairs settled, in Distempers are much worse to be cur'd than other Men." And he goes on to say that he considers many of the ailments of the people may be set down to "Debauchery" and their love of drinking. The Europeans, he says, are foolish to dress in the tropics as they would at home, and he tells how, going for a ride in the early morning, his periwig and "Cloths" were wet with dew.

This shrewd observer prescribes the most drastic remedies.

One good lady, who was going blind, he ordered to take "Millepedes alive, to one hundred in a morning, rising to that number by degrees, on the days when she took nothing else. By these means persisted in she first felt some relief, by degrees

recovered the sight of one Eye and then of the other, so that she could at last read Bibles of the smallest print, and was entirely cured." I am glad of that, for she had been bled by cupping, by scarification in the shoulders, blistered in the neck, and had had various other extremely disagreeable things done to her. But I hardly give the "Millepedes" credit, perhaps it was the abstinence from the many good things that came her way.

He certainly makes diverting reading on the people who came to him with various ailments, though I doubt whether his patients found anything particularly amusing in his treatment of them. He carefully sorts them all out according to their rank, for people were much more punctilious then than now. He mentions "Loveney, a negro woman of Colonel Ballard's," "one Barret," "a lusty woman," "one Cornwall's daughter," "a Gentleman aged about 40 years," "a young Gentlewoman aged about twelve years." And he is extremely frank as to their ailments and their causes. Of a "Gentlewoman aged about fifty years," he writes, "I attribute this disease to Wine Punch and Vinous Liquors, but she would not abstain, alledging that her Stomach was cold and needed something to warm it." We sometimes hear that statement in these days!

Again he tells us of a gentleman who in drinking "Madera Wine and Water, he made use of it too often, whereby he became usually, the more he drank, the more dry, so that after a small time he was necessitated to drink again." I think we also meet cases like that not infrequently. Sloane himself considers that water is the best drink, though he did not always practise what he preached, but his really lightning cure was that of that "lusty negro Footman Emanuel. Emanuel was ordered over-night

to get himself ready against next morning to be a guide on foot for about an hundred miles through the Woods to a place of the island to seize Pirates who, as the Duke of Albemarle was informed, had there unladed great quantities of Silver to Careen their Ship." Now Emanuel had evidently heard all about the pirates, and did not desire a closer acquaintance, and I have the sincerest sympathy with Emanuel. "About twelve a'Clock in the night he pretended himself to be extraordinary sick, he lay straight along, would not speak, and dissembled himself in great Agony by groaning, etc." But, alas, he had the cleverest doctor in the island to deal with. "His pulse beat well, neither had he any foaming at the mouth or difficulty in breathing. The Europeans who stood by thought him dead, Blacks thought him bewitched, and others were of opinion that he was poyson'd. I examined matters as nicely as I could, concluded that this was a new strange Disease such as I had never seen, or was not mention'd by any Authority I had read, or that he counterfeited it."

Poor Emanuel!

"Being confirmed that it was this latter, and that he could speak very well if he pleas'd, to frighten him out of it, I told the Standers by, that in such a desperate condition as this, 'twas usual to apply a Frying pan with burning Coals to the Head, in order to awake them thoroughly, and to draw from the Head, and that it was likewise an ordinary method to put Candles lighted to their Hands and Feet, that when the flame came to burn them they might be awaked. I sent two several People in all haste to get ready these things, in the meantime leaving him, that he might have time to consider and recover out of this fit of Dissumlation, which in a quarter of an hour he did, so that he came to speak. I question'd

him about his pain, he told me it was very great in his Back. I told him in short that he was a dissembler, bid him go and do his business without any more ado, or else he should have due Correction, which was the best Remedy I knew for him, he went about his Errand immediately and perform'd it well, though he came too late for the Pirats." I expect Emanuel knew a thing or two, and since the leading of the expedition was in his hands, very naturally saw to it that they did not come upon them too soon.

Sloane was not content to stay in Port Royal or at Spanish Town, which was the seat of the Government, but wandered about the island. At St Ann's, on Captain Hemmings' plantation, he found the ruins of Sevilla, the town the Spaniards built as their first capital. Whether he looked at those ruins with the eyes of a romance writer, I do not know. Certainly he seems to have found them much more magnificent than any other Spanish remains found warrant us in thinking them. He found a fort, a monastery, sugar works, and Captain Hemmings told him he often found pavements 3 feet deep under big canes. There were the ruins of several buildings not yet finished, and tradition said that the Europeans had been cut off by the Indians. The town had been overgrown for a long time, and he says most of the timber felled off this place, within the walls of the tower, was 60 feet long. "The West Gate of the Church was very fine Work and stands very entire, it was seven Foot wide, and as high before the Arch began. Over the door in the middle was our Saviour's head with a Crown of Thorns, between two Angels, on the right side a small round figure of some Saint with a Knife stuck into his Head, on the left a Virgin Mary or Madonna, her Arm tied in three places Spanish Fashion."

That pathetic, uncompleted old church at Sevilla, with the arched stones that lay about among the canes but had never been put up, tells a story of terror of the old days. But the English soldiery, contemptuous of all things Spanish, swept everything away, and I do not suppose that one of those stones he saw in Captain Hemmings' fields yet remains. All went long years ago.

Colonel Ballard told him that when the Spaniards left the island they abandoned not only their slaves but their dogs, great beasts as big as Irish greyhounds. These went wild and hunted of themselves the cattle that were in the savannahs and woods. Apparently these capable dogs had been used by their masters to hunt the Indians, for there was always a certain share of the booty on these occasions due to the master of the dogs. There were wild horses too in the woods, and the English settlers took the best and destroyed them, using them ruthlessly in the mills. Man has ever been cruel to the luckless beasts that fell into his hands. And Sloane remarks how smooth were the skins of these horses in comparison with the rough coated little horses introduced by the conquerors from New England. There were cattle too and the settlers as well as the buccaneers hunted these, killing them apparently rather wantonly, but probably there was not much else for the soldiers to feed on. "This way of taking the wild black Cattle," says Sloane, "cutting their tendons or Lancing is what is used by the Spaniards in their islands and Continents, and by Privateers and Bucaniers; but in Jamaica there remain very few wild Cattle to be taken and those are in the Northside of the Island in the less frequented parts. The manner in which the Spaniards and English killed these Cattle, besides the wild Dogs who used

of themselves to hunt and kill them, was with a Lance or Halberd, on the end of which was an Iron sharpened and made in the shape of a Crescent or Half Moon. These wild Cattle are said much to exceed the others in taste."

He tells too of the slaves, for negro slaves they had in those days as well as Indians and indentured white servants. "The Indians are not the natives of the island, they being destroyed by the Spaniards, but are usually brought by surprise from the Mosquitoes or Florida" (what blackguards were these old colonists) "or such as were slaves to the Spaniards and taken from them by the English. . . . They are of an olive colour, have long black lank hair, and are very good Hunters, Fishers, or Fowlers, but are naught at working in the Fields or Slavish Work, and if checkt or drub'd are good for nothing, therefore are very gently treated and well fed." . . . "Of the Negros . . . those who are Creolians, born in the island, or taken from the Spaniards, are reckoned worth more than the others in that they are seasoned to the Island."

Seasoned to the Island, indeed! He means their troubles there were the devil, they knew. And then he goes on to show us what these troubles might be. "The punishments for Crimes of Slaves are usually for rebellion by burning them, by nailing them down to the ground with crooked Sticks on every Limb and then applying the Fire by degrees from the Feet and Hands, burning them gradually up to the head whereby their Pains are extravagant. For Crimes of a lesser nature, Gelding, or chopping off Half the Foot with an Ax. Their Punishments are suffered by them with great Constancy.

"For running away they put Iron Rings of great weight on their Ankles, or Pottocks about their

necks, which are Iron Rings with two long Spikes rivetted to them or a Spur in the Mouth.

"For Negligence they are usually whipt by the Overseers with Lancewood Switches till they be bloody, and several of the Switches broken, being first tied up by their Hands in the Mill Houses. Beating with Manati Straps is thought too cruel, and therefore prohibited by the Customs of the Country. The Cicatrices are visible on their skins for ever after, and a slave, the more he have of those, is the less valu'd." So that was why it was prohibited to beat them with Manati Straps, for they do not otherwise appear to have been over-tender.

"After they are whip'd till they are Raw some put on their Skins Pepper and Salt to make them smart; at other times their Masters will drop melted Wax on their Skins and use several very exquisite Torments. These Punishments are sometimes merited by the Blacks, who are a very perverse Generation of People" (I remember that Miriam, my first waiting-maid, who wore her wool standing out in a series of little tails like a surprised night-mare, always considered the table laid when she had put on the carving knife, even though we proposed to eat eggs), "and though they appear Harsh" (harsh is hardly the term I should have used), "yet are scarcely equal to some of their Crimes and inferior to what punishments other European nations inflict on their slaves in the East Indies."

And we are left wondering what on earth the other nations could have done.

But there was one safeguard, a feeble one it is true, but still in some cases I dare say it was efficacious.

"There are many Negros sold to the Spaniards," he says, "who are either brought lately from Guinea,

or bad Servants or Mutinous in Plantations. They are sold to very good profit; but if they have many Cicatrices or Scars on them, the marks of their severe Corrections, they are not very saleable. The English got in return Cacao, Sarsaparilla, Pearls, Emeralds, Cochineal, Hides, &c."

So the thought of the pearls and emeralds they might be worth, perhaps saved many a poor slave from the cruel treatment that otherwise might have been his.

"I saw in this harbour (Port Royal)," says Sloane on one occasion, "a ship come from the Guineas loaded with blacks to sell. The Ship was very nasty with so many people on board."

"When a Guinea ship comes near to Jamaica with Blacks to sell," he goes on, "there is great care taken that the Negros should be shaved, trim'd, and their bodies and hair anointed all over with Palm Oil which adds great beauty to them. The Planters chose their Negros by their look and by the country from which they come. The Blacks from the East Indies" (what a cruel long way to come in a slave ship) "are fed on Flesh and Fish at home, and therefore are not coveted, because troublesome to nourish, and those from Angola run away from their Masters, and fancy on their deaths they are going home again, which is no lucriferous experiment, for on hard usage they kill themselves." No wonder, poor things, no wonder. And such were the times that kindly Hans Sloane merely remarks it is "no lucriferous experiment."

He also remarks that the negroes and Indians used to bathe themselves in fair water every day as "often as conveniently they can." Which really sounds as if their masters did not.

And he tells of treasure ships too, does Hans

Sloane, treasure ships such as we have dreamed of when we were young. He tells us of Sir William Phipps who wrote an account of the first finding of the great Plate ship wrecked to the north-east of Hispaniola. He went with one Rogers master of a small ship to Porto Plata, and there they discharged three guns to get the Spaniards to trade. They came down, they were forbidden to trade with the English, I believe, and the English sold them "small Bables," "and Searges," and they got in exchange hides and jerked hogs taken by the hunters there. Meanwhile Rogers had his heart set on the wreck and was making enquiries about it. He actually went looking for it and discovered it by means of a "Sea Feather growing on the planks of the Ship lying under the water." Back he came with the good news, and Sir William Phipps joined him with another ship, and they set to work in businesslike fashion to possess themselves of that silver. The ship was a Spanish galleon, lost about the year 1659, bound to Spain, and it was near thirty years later that these Merchant Venturers turned it to good account. Their two ships were laden with trade goods in case they failed to find the ship, but having found it they set to work to clear away the coral and lapis astroites which had grown over it, and "they took up silver as the Weather and their Divers held out, some days more and some days less. The small Ship went near, the great one rode afar off." And they actually took out in bullion £22,196, "30,326 of which were Sows," says Sloane, "and great Bars, 336." But it must have been pleasant standing on the deck of that small ship watching the sea-worn gold and silver that belonged of right to the Spaniards dumped on the planks. So the Venturers found it, for they stayed until the crews were short of

provisions and they had brought up 26 tons of silver. Then a sloop from Bermuda came to their aid with foodstuffs, but the secret was out, and while the foodless ships sailed away for home laden with their booty that sloop went back to Bermuda and talked, and many sloops and divers were sent down and a vast quantity more of plate and money was taken up, so that when the second fleet came from England most of what was left of that rich find was dispersed among people who certainly had as good a right to it as the first comers.

After that it became quite fashionable to take out patents to hunt for wrecks, and though Sloane says much money was made on that first wreck, much more was lost in the projects than ever was taken out of the sea.

Evidently to Hans Sloane his expedition to Jamaica loomed large, for it was years after he left it that his last volume on the subject was published. That voyage must have been *the* event of a fairly full life. After the death of the Duke of Albemarle, who certainly seems to have been a shining example of how not to live in the tropics, Hans Sloane, in the train of the Duchess, left Jamaica on the 16th March 1689, and did not arrive off the Lizard till the 29th May. How far off Jamaica was in those days we may judge when we are told that the fleet was afraid to go into Plymouth because they did not know whether England was at war or not. At last they picked up a fishing smack and heard that James II. had been deposed, that William III. reigned in his stead, and that the Channel was full of French privateers.

Before I leave the subject of Jamaica's first historian, I must tell a strange story that was told me by a friend. He told his experience reluctantly,

he does not believe in the supernatural, and he is quite sure there must be some perfectly natural explanation of the incident could he but find it. There was something wrong with his knee and he was afraid he was going to be a cripple for life, for no doctor could find out what was wrong. He used to struggle from his bed on to a board and his servants carried him that way to a sofa, where he spent his daylight hours. So it went on from day to day and he had little hope of getting better. At night his black manservant slept on the floor close to his bed, so as to be near in case he should want any help. Naturally, being a young and active man and not given to books, he was much depressed at the outlook.

One night as he lay in bed he wakened suddenly from his sleep with the feeling that somebody was in the room. For a moment he could see nothing, only hear the snores of the man on the floor. Then as he looked he saw the moonlight streaming through the open window, and right in its light stood a man, not anyone he knew, but a white man with a kindly face, his brown hair drawn back and tied behind with a ribbon, and his brown coat, knee-breeches, stockings and shoes those of other days. He said nothing, but, smiling quietly, came towards the bed and laying his hand on the injured leg began slowly stroking it up and down. It was infinitely soothing, and presently to his surprise my friend closed his eyes, and when he opened them again his strange visitor had gone. He felt strangely at ease and fell asleep. When he waked in the morning he rose up, and, discarding the board on which he had been carried, told everyone he was going to get well and would require it no more. And sure enough he never did.

From that day he mended and now hardly knows which leg was bad. But instead of wondering, as I should have done, whether the Duke of Albemarle's physician had visited him, he says, "Only fancy, I'm sure it was only fancy." He is not a reading man, and I don't think he has ever heard of Hans Sloane.

But if I skipped some of Hans Sloane's two great volumes, I must confess to having raced through at a much faster rate many of the other books on early Jamaica. There is a novel called *Marly*, the scene of which is laid in the beginning of the last century, and so dull it is I can hardly believe it was presented to people for amusement. If they had nothing else to read, it almost excuses the ignorance and easy-going ways of the planters and their families. Not that these regarded themselves as ignorant by any means. Uncultured as they were, they held themselves far above any of their dependents, though the ladies might, and often did, sit round the pepper pot with their black serving women, ate as they did, and talked as they did. Lady Nugent, the Governor's wife, between 1801 and 1805, found great difficulty in talking to them, and she, of course, met the best.

"A party of ladies with me at the Penn," she writes, "and never was there anything so completely stupid. All I could get out of them was, 'Yes, ma'am,' 'No, ma'am,' with now and then a simper or a giggle. At last I set them to work stringing beads, which is now one of my occupations; and I was heartily glad when their carriages came at 2 o'clock."

Of course Lady Nugent forgets that she was a very great lady, and that quite likely these wives and daughters of the planters were shy. They might have shown to greater advantage if she could have

met them on equal terms. But she never did. She seems to have been a cheery soul, but I am afraid she was convinced she was made of very superior clay. She is always complaining that she finds "sad want of local matter or indeed any subject of conversation with them." The manner of their speech, too, was bad.

"The Creole language," she says, "is not confined to the negroes. Many of the ladies who have not been educated in England speak a sort of broken English, with an indolent drawling out of their words that is very tiresome, if not disgusting. I stood next to a lady one night, next to a window, and by way of saying something remarked that the air was much cooler than usual, to which she answered, "Yes, ma'am, him railly too fra-ish."

Probably we should be surprised could we reincarnate them to find these ladies giving themselves all the airs of a *grande dame*, though they had less learning than any cook-maid nowadays, less than the little black boys and girls trotting along the steep and stony paths with slates on their heads to their daily school. But the lords and ladies of that time were hardly models of decorum.

"I wish," goes on this gossipy good lady who is very sure of herself and her own position in the world, "I wish Lord Balcarres" (the Governor whose place General Nugent was taking) "would wash his hands and use a nail brush, for the black edges of his nails really make me sick. He has, besides, an extraordinary propensity to dip his fingers into every dish. Yesterday he absolutely helped himself to some fricassee with his dirty finger and thumb." And again, "We drove to Lord Balcarres' Penn. Never was such a scene of dirt and discomfort. Lord B. was in a sad fright,

thinking we should expect breakfast. However, upon his secretary's whispering to me that there was but one whole teacup and a saucer and a half, we declared our intention of returning to the King's House, where a party was waiting for us to breakfast."

If that could be written of the King's representative of one of the premier colonies only thirty-five years before Queen Victoria came to the throne, what must we not forgive in the planters of a century earlier.

Lady Nugent has a certain fearful joy in recounting the backslidings of the men of her day, which makes her most amusing reading, while it certainly throws a good deal of light on the manners and customs of her times.

"The overseer, a vulgar Scotch officer on half pay, did the honours to us. . . . I talked to the black women, who told me all their histories. The overseer's *chère amie* (and no man here is without one) is a tall black woman, well made, with a flat nose, thick lips and a skin of ebony, highly polished and shining. She showed me her three yellow children, and said with ostentation she would soon have another. . . . The marked attention of the other women plainly proved her to be the favourite Sultana of this vulgar, ugly Scotch Sultan."

As a rule, of course, white ladies did not visit the house where a coloured woman was established. They probably giggled and sniggered, and talked in hushed voices into each other's ears, while the little girls looked innocent and had to pretend they did not understand, but Lady Nugent seems to have broken down the unwritten law, perhaps like a King of old she was above all law.

She tells a story of a slave addressing a Mr

Shirley, "a profligate character as far as I can understand."

"'Hi, Massa, you telly me marry one wife which is no good. You no tinky I see you buckra no content wid one, two, three, four wives, no more poor negro.' The overseers, too, are in general needy adventurers, without either principle, religion, or morality. Of course their example must be the worst possible to these poor creatures. . ." The smugness of Lady Nugent!

"A little mulatto girl sent into the drawing-room to amuse me," says she, writing of her visit to Mr Simon Taylor's, an old bachelor at Liguanea. "She was a sickly, delicate child, with straight light hair and very black eyes. Mr T. appeared very anxious for me to dismiss her, and in the evening the housekeeper told me she was his own daughter and he had a numerous family, some almost on every one of his estates."

When she left the gentlemen she took tea in her own room, surrounded by the black, brown, and yellow ladies of the house, and fairly revelled in gossip, this being the time, of course, when she heard of its master's peccadilloes.

We smile at Lady Nugent, but after all she does succeed in giving us some idea of how the planters of Jamaica lived in her day, all the more so because she is unconscious of doing anything beyond telling the tale of her life and sufferings in a far land with what she regarded as a pestilential climate. But she by no means holds such a high place in my affections as Hans Sloane.

CHAPTER IV

THE CASTLES ON THE GUINEA COAST

JAMAICA is a thickly populated country. The last census taken in 1911 gave a population of 197 to the square mile, and this is mostly black, for the same statistics give something under 16,000 white people to close on 800,000 black and coloured, and in all probability among the so-called white there would be a trace of colour.

Now I was warned not to touch on the colour question when I wrote on Jamaica, which is really like writing about the present times without mentioning the Great War. You must mention the colour question. If a man is charming and courteous and well educated, what can it matter what his shade, and I who was brought up in Australia, where the colour question is a burning one, can say this with feeling.

I have listened to a white woman, whose only recommendation was that she was white, draw herself up and sniff when speaking of a highly cultivated man whose only fault in her eyes could be that there was a trace of colour in his veins.

"Well, I promised my husband I'd receive *him*, but his wife—I do draw the line at his wife."

I could see no reason why she should not receive his wife, who had seen a great deal more of the world than she had and was a much more interesting

Photo from] [*Lieut.-Col. Beckles Willson.*

CHRISTIANSBORG CASTLE (GOLD COAST).

[*Price plate 75.*

personality. Every man has a right to choose his personal friends, but it seems to me the only reason why a community should ban a race is when that race lowers the standard of living and so imperils the life of the master people. This, of course, is at the root of the colour question, and I could write a book about it.

Men and women with just a dash of the tar brush are often extremely good looking, in fact, never have I seen more beautiful children than in Jamaica, save possibly in Sicily, where a dash of colour from Africa thrown into the stock long, long ago, makes for beauty. But the black man, however good looking, however well educated, has one handicap; a stiffly starched white shirt-front and a black evening coat bear very heavily indeed on him. He may be college bred, have the softest and most cultivated of voices, but the dress imposed upon him by civilisation is apt to take away from his dignity. In Africa they are beginning to realise this, and the Ashanti Chief is never allowed to dress in European costume, and he looks every inch a Chief in the beautiful silken robes, the gay colours of which set off the complexion the sun has kissed.

And if a black man looks bad in fashionable clothes, the black woman looks even worse. How this can be mended I know not; but I feel sure that as soon as the black people find a style of dress that will set off their beauty, much of the feeling against coloured blood will vanish.

It is coming. I went to church one day in Kingston, and, I think, with the exception of the minister in black Geneva gown and white bands, I was the only full-blooded white person present. But the church was full and the people struck me as being very good looking and well dressed, especially

the little children. A dainty little girl of African blood with flashing dark eyes and milk-white teeth, dressed in white embroidery with white socks and shoes and a white ribbon in her dark hair, is a thing of beauty.

The most lovely girl I have ever seen in my life is a Creole with a little coloured blood in her veins. She has long brown hair, splendid dark eyes, white teeth, and a clear skin of pale brown that is soft as velvet. She is more than common tall, but so well proportioned that you do not think so until you see her beside some other woman. She is an athlete, she can ride, she can dance, and she can swim and dive like a fish. Truly a daughter of the Gods is she, and Jamaica may be proud of her.

There are people who will say, "Yes, at nineteen, but these Creoles always go off, their beauty does not last. They grow old so soon." Exactly the same was said of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers. The Creole who lives wisely, as women are beginning to live everywhere nowadays, is quite as likely to be good looking at forty, or even at sixty, I think, as the daughter of a cooler clime. Of course if she yield to indolence and do nothing but suck sweets or smoke cigarettes and sleep, why, the inevitable will happen.

My daughter of the tropics is abounding in life. She owns a canoe, the *Dodo*, a little light boat, with which she can go skimming over the waters of Montego Bay.

"I only take the children who can swim well," says she, "and when I was younger, they won't let me now I'm grown up, we used to visit all the schooners and cutters that came into the bay."

The logwood schooners are manned by Norwegians, big fair men, who complimented her on her skill in

managing a boat, and said she ought to have come from the North, "though why," said she, "shouldn't a Creole sail a boat?" And there are big brown men from the Cayman Islands, descendants of the buccaneers, giants with the blood of all the nations of the world in their veins. They trade in salt. And men of all shades, from palest yellow to the blackest black, go dodging in and out of Jamaican ports, and one and all they carry on their bowsprits a shark's fin to make their little ships sail well.

"But why," I asked, "did you only take children who could swim?"

"Because," she laughed, "if you fall out of a canoe you can't get in again." And she told me how on one occasion the laden canoe became extremely interested in an electric eel lying on the bottom, for the water of the bay is beautifully clear, and all rushed to one side to inspect. Over went the little craft, and then the biggest boy, aged I think 12, saw the danger and flung himself to the other side. He was just in time. The boat righted itself, but he lost his balance and fell into the water, with more than a mile to go before he reached the shore. No wonder young Diana insists that all her passengers should be able to swim well.

There are some useful citizens growing up in Montego Bay for a nation that counts herself the ruler of the seas.

I set out to write about the Castles on the Guinea Coast, and I have wandered to the shores of Montego Bay on the other side of the Atlantic, and yet they are not as far apart as one would think.

It is a far, far cry from the days when the Portuguese, and the English, and Dutch, and Danes, and Brandenburgers, and Swedes, built with slave labour great stone castles with walls and bastions,

towers, and portcullises, all along the Guinea Coast from the mouth of the Gambia River to Whydah in Dahomey. The castles are there to-day to tell the tale, and some years ago before the war I travelled along 300 miles of that coast in a hammock borne on men's heads, and again and again as we moved along, our pace regulated by that of the slowest carrier who bore my goods upon his head, there loomed up before us either on a jutting headland, or at the head of some shallow bay, the grey and massive walls of some long-forgotten Castle. Truly one may say forgotten, only a few officials remember these trading strongholds of the past, and if some care, those in authority declare they are not worth keeping up since they are but relics of an iniquitous trade that is best not remembered.

But the past cannot be wiped out. I hardly understood that till I came to Jamaica, till I watched the black women in ragged frocks and dilapidated hats weeding my garden, till I saw the roads thronged with them bearing burdens on their heads. It was forced upon me more emphatically when there came into my compound in Montego Bay one of the men who helped mend the roads in the forlornest remains of what had once been a shirt and trousers, while on his arm he wore what made him look like the savage he was, a bracelet of some red composition which had doubtless by its bright colour caught his eye. These were the same people, the very same people who had been brought from the Guinea Coast, more than one hundred, more than two hundred years ago. They are the same people you see on the Guinea Coast to-day. They called the people from this coast Koromantyns, and though they were, they said, the best slaves to be had, strong and vigorous, yet the French and Spanish refused to buy them, for they

were warlike and were apt to rise and fight fiercely for their liberty. Probably many of them had Ashanti blood in their veins, and the Ashantis made good fighting men. The Krobos, too, were a little more to the East, and the Krobos were savages who, even in this century, allowed no young man to marry until he had killed his man.

Often these fortified castles of the different European nations were within a stone's throw of each other, often they were destroyed, often they changed hands as the power of one nation waxed or waned, but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the trade was the great thing and these men of old held their little scraps of land, held them though the holding cost them many lives.

Koromantyn, a Castle not far from Cape Coast, was the chief trading place of the English along that shore, till De Ruyter knocked it about their ears. The custom of the English, I judged, when they built a Castle for themselves, and did not take it from some one else, was to choose a site at the head of a bay and build close down to the water's edge, but Koromantyn departs from the usual practice and was built on high rising ground, a site the Portuguese (Portugals the old mariners called them) themselves might have chosen. I have thought of it many a time since I came to Jamaica, for always the slave risings—and the risings were many—were headed by the Koromantyns. Even now, guarding nothing, for the courtyard is overgrown with tropical vegetation, its ruined walls rise up tall and steep and straight, and at their foot among the rubble and coarse grass, lie rusting the cannon that once made them formidable.

Remember, it was not only the black men who suffered, for if with cruel force upon the sons of Ham fell the primeval curse, the venturesome men who

dared so much for greed and adventure were not exempt. And they were venturesome. Reading between the lines as we look up the old records, we feel that the trials endured in the finding of the Poles were more than equalled by what these traders of old must have borne in their search for wealth, the wealth ofttimes being for someone else. The gold is only found further inland now, the elephant is gone, and the trade in men is dead. Dead, yes; but it is impossible to forget here in Jamaica, or as you wander along the Guinea Coast. The sands of the sea cry the story, the shame, shame, shame of it! the tumbling waves take it up, and insist as they crash on the sand in the still hot noonday, or in the glory of the moonlight night, that the end is not yet. I did not understand what they cried to me then, but Jamaica cries out, "Here, here, is the unfinished work of those old time slavers, here is the job incomplete, left for Britain to finish as best she may."

One hot day in March I left Cape Coast and came by the sea-shore, ten miles or more, along the yielding sand, just beyond reach of the furious white surf, but not out of the reach of its spray, and the memories of the men of old, the men who traded here when Cromwell ruled in England, when Queen Anne sat on the throne, when the unwelcome Georges came over from Hanover, crowded thick in every grove of coconut palms, rose to meet me on every grassy headland. The footsteps of the hammock bearers were clearly marked, and the waves came sweeping up and swept them away, the black crabs, like so many pincushions on stilts, raced after the receding waters, and the wading-birds stalked over the half-liquid sand seeking their livelihood. Overhead was the heavy blue African sky, on the right, the dark blue sea with white-topped breakers that rushed from

the Pole, half a world away, to fling themselves in thunderous clamour upon the Guinea Coast, and on the left was a low sandy ridge covered with sparse sea-grass and broad-leaved creeping bean. Just such a bean grows on the sea-shore, outside the gates of my house here in Montego Bay, where I write this book. Here and there was a little low undergrowth and coarse elephant grass, and again and again were palm-thatched villages, with surf boats drawn up on the sand, and groves of coconut palms that added beauty to the scene. The brawny, dark men fished, flinging their nets into the sea, or launched their surf boats on a wider venture, and the women beat their cassava or banana into *kenky* or *fufu*, and the little naked pot-bellied children played in the shade as children play all the world over, and raced to see the unusual sight of a white woman who had departed from the usual custom of the white folks and come along the shore.

Such is the scene now, such was the scene more than three hundred years ago, when the maiden Queen sat on the throne of England and Hawkins made his first expedition, such was the scene a hundred years later when Phillips in the *Hannibal* of 450 tons and 36 guns came on an expedition trading for gold, elephants' teeth, and slaves—more especially for slaves. I thought of those old-world men as we passed along, and the sea kept wiping out all traces of the passing of my hammock bearers. But the people would remember that in such a year a white woman had passed that way, even as I remembered that Phillips had passed. And the cool of the morning passed, and the breathless sweltering March midday of the Guinea Coast held all the land, and grey stone walls loomed up clear-cut against the blue of the sky.

"A Castle?"

"Annamabu, Ma. You chop?" That was all my headman thought. For him there was no past. He had come from Cape Coast this morning—if he could only make me see that it was fit and suitable that I should stay at Annamabu till the following morning, that was all the future he asked.

Annamabu is right on the sea-shore, built upon the rocks that crop out of the surrounding sand. So did the English keep watch and ward over their trade here. It is a great square grey pile, dignified in its very simplicity, and the only entrance is through a low tunnel in the great wall, narrow, and nowhere more than five feet four high. Once the dark people of the land took Annamabu, how, I cannot imagine, for those straight grim walls would seem to defy anything that a savage people could bring against them. There was a town at a little distance, built for the most part with the swish walls and thatched roofs common to the country, but here and there, shabby with the shabbiness of the tropics and the negro combined, were stone houses built on European lines that must have been miniature forts in their time. There is no need of a fort now, there is peace in the land, even the mighty pile of the Castle is delivered over to the care of the negroes, and the glory is departed. I went up the slanting path to the narrow entrance, the entrance, grim and dark and damp, and I got out of my hammock for it was too narrow to admit a hammock, and walked into the courtyard where the powers that be, represented by a medical officer some miles away along the shore, had piled up a store of boards to make certain accommodation for the town of Annamabu, which the inhabitants of the town of Annamabu, being

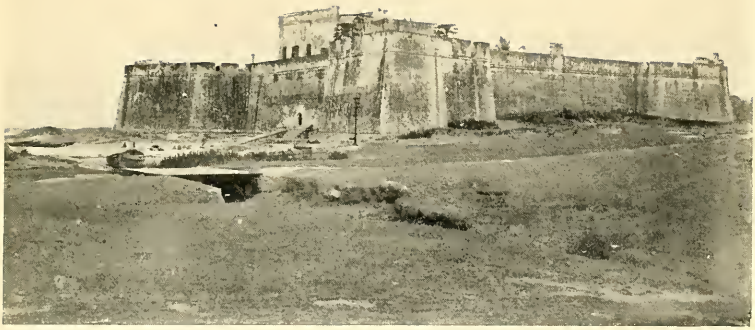

Photo by] [*the Author.*

ANNAMABU FORT.

Photo by] [*the Author.*

GATEWAY, ANNAMABU FORT.

[*Face page* 84.

children of nature, will never use. The sun beat down in that courtyard and took one's energy away. How, how in this languid, languishing heat were these mighty stones ever piled one upon the other? Only, surely, by slave labour, only, surely, by the aid of the whip and the goad.

"The negro inhabitants are accounted very bold and stout fellows," said Phillips of the *Hannibal* who had come to enslave them, "but the most desperate, treacherous villains and great cheats upon the whole coast, for the gold here is accounted the worst and most mixed with brass of any in Guiny. The Castle, pretty strong, of about 18 guns."

It was an offshoot of Koromantyn and was built by the Royal Adventurers of England in 1624, but Admiral de Ruyter, the Dutchman, in 1665 drove them out and took the castle, not without a good deal of bloodshed. But in 1673 a new company, the Royal African Company was formed, and out of the wrecked remains of what de Ruyter had left they built up the present castle. It was mysterious to go out of the garish sunshine of the courtyard into the gloom of the tunnelled staircase that led to the bastion, and to remember that Phillips and men of his ilk had passed up that self-same staircase more than two hundred years before, had stood on that self-same bastion in like hot sunshine, had watched the vultures settle on the roof of the little ammunition house in the corner, and the flag of Britain flutter out from the flag-staff that the hard cement foundation supported. Beyond was the sea, whence had come those grim old slavers, and I, a woman from the South, the land of liberty. All round the walls from their embrasures grinned those eighteen guns that defended the castle and terrorised the negroes. And round them is piled

up the shot that has never been used and will never be used now. On the west side the coconut palms have grown up, the wind whispers among the fronds that overshadow the guns, whispers that though their day is done the problem that they started still remains, and has only been taken with blood and bitter tears to the other side of the Atlantic. By the sea-shore of this lovely island I hear its echo crying mournfully. In one of the embrasures of the wall from among the piled shot had grown up a green pawpaw tree. The pawpaw is but an ephemeral thing, a tree of a year or so, but its fruit is good to eat. Shall good come out of evil? It marks decay too. Not so would they have kept the castle when Phillips saluted with seven guns to show he was minded to trade for those "stalwart villains," the men of Annamabu.

Everything is very straight up and down, very square and grey and solid. Possibly Mr Searle, the factor Phillips talks about, and his young mulatto wife dwelt in those rooms or in rooms not unlike them, very tall and large, with great window spaces. There was little furniture in my time, though this was supposed to be a rest-house. But no man ever comes along the coast now, now that the slaves are not, and the gold is not, and the elephants are gone. The place is held solely for the benefit of the negro, and the dust has settled on everything. There are customs clerks and telegraph clerks, but they are negro, and as yet they do not care. Neither do the English who dwell and rule from Accra, for Accra is far, when the only means of progression is a man's pace, and the rulers say, "These old shells of castles are not worth preserving." Are they not?

But, indeed and indeed, the air is thick with

memories. Here, in these dark rooms on the ground floor, hot and airless, did they store their goods in olden days, "perpetuanos and sayes, knives, old sheets, pewter basons and muskets," which Phillips has left on record were the best goods with which to buy slaves on the Gold Coast in the seventeenth century. They did not bring out their women, but they took to themselves wives of the daughters of the land, comely, smooth-skinned, dark-eyed girls, with full, round bosoms and a carriage like queens, and the daughters of these unions were much sought after.

"Then came Mrs Rankin," writes Phillips, of a factor's temporary wife, "who was a pretty young mulatto with a rich silk cloth about her middle, and a silk cap upon her head, flowered with gold and silver, under which her hair was combed out at length, for the mulattoes covet to wear it so in imitation of the whites"—remember the white men wore their hair long in those days—"never curling it up or letting it frizzle as the blacks do. She was accompanied, or rather attended by the second's and doctor's wives, who were young blacks about thirteen years of age. This is a very pleasant way of marrying," goes on the gossipy mariner, "for they can turn them off and take others at pleasure, which makes them very careful to humour their husbands in washing their linen, cleaning their chambers, etc., and the charge of keeping them is little or nothing."

Poor children, poor, happy, sad, pitiful children, bearing children and taking a woman's part in ministering to the pleasures of these their masters at an age when our children would still be babies in the nursery. It was a custom that died hard. Twelve years ago the nursing sister at Sekondi told

me that when first she was stationed there she saw a girl, just arrived at marriageable age, sent round to all the likely white men in the town, tricked out in all the bravery common to the occasion. She saw her return, too, return in tears, not because she had been chosen, but because she had not! The standard of morals is higher on the coast in these times.

And the end of these women? No one has ever told us of their end. I remember when I was in Sekondi a sad-faced mulatto woman with the remains—only the remains—of great beauty about her, though possibly she was barely thirty-five, and the nursing sister shook her head over Adjuah.

"She is going to die," she said. "She does not care to live." It appears she had lived with some white man who had been fond of her as he passed by, and she had given him her whole soul. Then came the inevitable, the time when he departed for Accra, and Adjuah was distracted. She could not believe he had left her for ever, and she, too, started along the coast for the distant town. Like many another loving woman she felt if he could only see her all would be well. But barely a day's journey along the coast came the great Prah river, and it passed her powers to cross it. She waited there for days, and then, reluctantly, all along the burning sands she crawled back wearily to the shelter of the woman she knew would care for her, and there she waited listlessly—to die. Is that what happened to these little girls flaunting it so proudly in their silken clothes? Indeed, worse things might happen to them. Possibly they were sold as slaves; most surely their children were, for it is said in Jamaica that every overseer and book-keeper took a mistress

from among the slaves, a girl who came to him gladly for the betterment of her lot, but she knew and he knew that their children must be born into servitude, and the father, when the time came for him to go, left them as lightly as he would so many cattle.

Spear, in his book on the American slave trade, tells how, in the days when the trade was being suppressed, the British warship *Medina*, on boarding a slaver off the Gallinas River, found no slaves on board. "The officers learned afterwards, however, that her captain really had had a mulatto girl in the cabin. He kept her for some time after the cruiser appeared, but seeing that he was to be boarded, and knowing that the presence of one slave was enough to condemn the ship, he tied her to a kedge anchor and dropped her into the sea. And so, as is believed, he drowned his own unborn flesh and blood, as well as the slave girl." Think of the state of public opinion when a whole crew could stand calmly by, or even give a hand to perpetrate such an atrocious deed. Is it any wonder that, on any land where was such slavery as this, there seems to have fallen a curse; less favoured lands have flourished, but gorgeous tropical countries, where vegetation runs riot, have not kept abreast in the race. Surely those unconscious little girls, unconscious of their own woes, sometimes the pampered slave, bound to be the out-cast slave in the end, have brought a curse upon them. It broods over Africa. It is here in Jamaica, it will take much wisdom and many many years to work it off.

Of course it was not only the women who suffered. Slavery was the custom of the time, and men and women alike were chattels. It was the pitiful pretence to place and power that makes us feel

more keenly the case of these little girls who were wives and yet no wives, and gained honour for a brief season by being associated with the white men.

And in Annamabu came home to me clearly, the cargoes, the thrice-accursed cargoes these men had set their hearts upon, the cargoes that were the *raison d'être* of these heavily armed castles. In Phillips' day a really good negro might be bought on the Coast at a cost of about £4 for the most expensive, while he might be sold for about £19 in Jamaica or Barbadoes.

"I had two little negro boys presented to me here," says he with a certain satisfaction, "by our honest factors, and two more at Cape Corso." Nobody considered the feelings of the boys torn from their homes. And well might he be pleased, for these presumably were his private property, and not to be accounted among the cargo. When Ansumanah, my own serving boy, sat in the shade at the bottom of the flight of stairs that led up to the bastion, I remembered Phillips' two little boys who had attended their master here. The stone steps are worn, worn in the years by the passing of many unshod feet, sad and glad and hopeful and despairing, but what had the little boys that Phillips was taking to the Indies to hope for?

Exactly at Annamabu he did not gather his slaves, but a little farther along the Coast. Here he took on board 180 chests of corn with which to feed them. The little squat ship having laid in her provisions, went slowly along the coast, and in the daylight the people came off in their canoes, and at night they lighted fires along the shore as a sign they had something to trade, and their trade goods were always the same, gold, elephants' teeth, that is, ivory, or men, and generally they required the

captain to come down over the side of his ship and drop three drops of sea water in his eye as a pledge of friendship and of safety for them to come aboard, "which" says Phillips, "I very readily consented to and performed in hopes of a good market."

Sometimes he got ivory, but his ship was a slaver, slaves she was looking for and slaves she would get, for might was right and wars were perpetually waged—by the black men be it understood—in order that there might be plenty of the commodity. The commodity, being flesh and blood, suffered.

"The master of her brought in three women and four children to sell," he remarks casually of a canoe that hailed him from the shore, "but he asked very dear for them and they were almost dead from want of victuals, looking like mere skeletons and so weak they could not stand, so that they were not worth buying. He promised to procure us two or three hundred slaves if we would anchor and come ashore and stay two or three days, but, judging what the others might be by the sample he brought us, and being loth to venture ashore upon his bare word, where we did not use to trade and had no factory, we sent him away and resumed our voyage."

He has left us a very graphic account of the manner in which he and the captain of the *East Indian Merchant* bought their wares. The slaves were evidently got in small parcels, secured in the factories and shipped off on calm days, for the surf of the Guinea Coast would not always allow of a landing. Where they kept them at Annamabu or in the dominant factory at Koromantyn, I do not know, probably in the court-yard or in the dark dungeons, dark and hot and airless that surrounded it, and the reek of them must have gone up to heaven, calling down a curse upon those captors

who were apparently so unconscious of wrongdoing. At Whidah, to which Phillips traded from Annamabu, it is not very far away, there was only a small factory, and the local chief or "king" collected the slaves for sale and kept them in a "trunk," which Phillips and the captain of the *East Indian Merchant*, attended by their respective doctors and pursers, visited daily to make their purchases.

The purser's business was to pay for the goods I suppose, and the surgeon he considers absolutely necessary.

"Our surgeon examined them well in all kinds to see that they were sound, wind and limb, making them jump, stretch out their arms swiftly, looking in their mouths to judge of their age; for the cappashiers are so cunning that they shave them all close before we see them, so that, let them be never so old, we can see no grey hairs in their heads or beards, and then, having liquored them well and sleek with palm oil, 'tis no easy matter to know an old one from a middle-aged one but by the teeth's decay . . . therefore our surgeon is forced to examine . . . both men and women with the nicest scrutiny which is a great slavery but can't be omitted."

"This place where the slaves were kept day and night," he records, putting the matter very plainly, "was so foul that I often fainted with the horrid stink of the negroes." And he was a hard-bitten sailor of the seventeenth century accustomed to the close evil-smelling ships of his period! But he has no particular word of pity for the closely-herded negroes whose condition produced such a state of affairs.

"We marked the slaves we had bought in the breast or shoulder with a hot iron having the letter of the ship's name upon it, the place being before

anointed with a little palm oil which caused but little pain, the mark being usually well in four or five days, appearing very plain and white after." And this is an allegory surely. The mark that slavery made has always appeared very plain after.

And when the surf allowed, the slaves were marched down to the shore and "our canoes carry them off to the long boat, and she conveyed them aboard ship where the men were all put in irons two and two, shackled together, to prevent their mutiny or swimming ashore."

"The negroes are so wilful and loth to leave their own country," he records mournfully as a man who may expect sympathy, "that they have often leaped out of the canoe, boat, and ship, into the sea, and kept under water till they were drowned, to avoid being taken up and saved by our boats which pursued them, they having a more dreadful apprehension of Barbadoes than we can have of hell, tho' in reality they live much better there than in their own country." The shackling as an introduction to this improved home life was perhaps not calculated to inspire confidence. "But home is home," moralises Phillips. "We have likewise seen divers of them eaten by sharks, of which a prodigious number kept about the ships in this place. We had about twelve negroes did wilfully drown themselves, and others starved themselves to death, for 'tis their belief that when they die they return home to their own country and friends again. I have been informed that some commanders have cut off the legs of the most wilful to terrify the rest, for they believe if they lose a member they cannot return home again. I was advised by some of my officers to do the same, but I could not be persuaded to entertain the least thoughts of it, much less to put in practice such

barbarous cruelty to poor creatures who, excepting their want of Christianity, true religion (their misfortune, more than fault) are as much the works of God's Hands and no doubt as dear to Him as ourselves." Surprising words from a slaver!

He himself has but a poor opinion of the men of his calling.

"They commonly undermine, betray, and outbid one another," he writes, "and the Guiney commanders' words and promises are the least to be depended upon of any I know use the sea, for they would deceive their fathers in their trade if they could."

And then when the slaves were on board, and the grey castles were down on the horizon, and the long, long voyage was begun, there were troubles not only for the wretched merchandise, but for those who carried them.

"When our slaves are aboard," he says again, "we shackle them two and two while we lie in port, and in sight of their own country, for 'tis then they attempt to make their escape or mutiny, to prevent which we always keep sentinels upon the hatchways, and have a chest of small arms ready loaden and trim'd, constantly lying at hand upon the quarterdeck together with some granada shells, and two of our quarterdeck guns pointing on the deck thence, and two more out of the steerage, the door of which is always kept shut and well barred.

"They are fed twice a day, at 10 in the morning, and 4 in the evening, which is the time they are apt to mutiny, being all upon the deck; therefore, all that time what of our men who are not employed in distributing their victuals to them and settling them, stand to their arms with lighted matches at the great guns that yawn upon them, loaden with

cartridge, till they have done and gone below to their kennels between decks."

What a picture of life aboard a slaver!

"Great mortality among the slaves," he writes wearily later on, "which together with their stink and nastiness"—and he goes on feelingly to tell of a Dutch skipper, Clause, who said if his owners would give him £100 per month to go and carry negroes again, he would not take it, but would sooner go elsewhere a common sailor, for 20 guilders a month.

No wonder. Out of 700 taken on board the *Hannibal* some died every day, and by the time they reached Barbadoes they had thrown overboard 320 of them, and all the comment her master makes is that it was a clear loss to the owners, the African Company, of £10 for every negro that so died.

But there is another thing he notices with intense surprise. He was "forced to clap one Lord, the trumpeter, in irons, for his being the promoter of unseasonable carousing bouts," we can understand it would never have done for the crew to indulge in such bouts with such a cargo, "and though he remained upon the poop day and night in irons for two months, without any other shelter than the canopy of heaven, he was never troubled with any sickness, but made good the proverb that 'Naught's never in danger.'" And while he goes on complaining of enduring so "much misery and stench among a parcel of creatures nastier than swine," it never occurs to him, or to anybody else for that matter, for many a long day, that he had provided his recreant trumpeter with at least one safeguard in plenty of air.

Three hundred and twenty negroes murdered on that voyage alone. No wonder "Ichabod" is written

over those old castles. Koromantyn that was once the chief stronghold, head castle of the English, is no more, its guns are red with rust, its walls are crumbling to ruin, its courtyards are desolate and grass-grown, and the people from the neighbouring villages go there when they want shaped stones. Annamabu still stands a model of what these castles used to be—with the exception of Elmina, the best model and best preserved along the 300 miles of coast. Cape Coast has been used for many purposes, but no white man can live there, because no servant will stay there, they declare it is haunted. Well it might be, for the dungeons are deep and dark, and assuredly they have been used. Kommenda is a shell, and no native will go into the courtyard where the bush is beginning to grow up because there is ju-ju upon it, and the evil spirits make it their home. At Annamabu, as I sat at luncheon, there came up a quick tropical storm. The roar of the wind hushed the sound of the ceaseless surf, the coconut palms bent before it, and the rain came down in torrents. It blotted out the sea, it swept off the bastion in streams, it beat down the breakers, and like a grey mist it shut out the surrounding landscape.

"You stop here, Ma," said my head man with a satisfaction he did not conceal.

Stop there? With all the ghosts of the past? Would not the mulatto girl, who was the factor's wife, come back and walk along this bastion, as she must have done more than two hundred years ago? Would she be sad? Or glad? Or proud? Would not the men and women who had been driven so unwillingly through that long-tunnelled entrance, been shut up in those dark dungeons on the ground floor, come back mourning and wailing? Would not the white man, who had looked out over the sea

with longing eyes, come tramping those stones again, heedless of dark mistress or coffers slowly piling with gold, counting the days, as he had counted them so often, when in his own pleasant land again he would enjoy the fruits of his labour? Stay? No, a thousand times, no, no. And the tropical storm passed, the golden rays of the afternoon sun fell through the slanting rain drops, and then the rain stopped and a mist rose up from the wet stones, and the sea lay blue, reflecting the blue sky above, and I went down the steps and into the tunnel, and out of the courtyard and away along the sea-shore past Koromantyn, and only in Jamaica did I realise that by the merest chance, I had seen and appreciated the beginnings of the iniquitous Middle Passage, that I had come upon the place whence came all the slaves who led the insurrections in that island for close on two hundred years.

I have wandered in my life, far and wide, east and west, but that remote castle on the Guinea Coast made a far deeper impression than many a more important place.

CHAPTER V

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE

All up and down the roads of Jamaica tramp ceaselessly the dark people. In the towns now, I notice many of the men, when they have anything to carry, carry it in their hands, under their arms, or on their backs, but the women are not so progressive. I don't quite believe the yarn about the girl, who, having been sent to buy a postage stamp, put it on her head, with a stone to keep it in place, but, certainly, the women still adhere to the old African way of bearing a burden on their heads. From my verandah all day, and twenty times a day, I could see men arranging the load on their companion's head, and the woman accepting the help offered, and trotting along meekly behind the man, though he went empty-handed.

Men and women are in all shades, but mostly, of course, black, often with the woolly hair and thick coarse lips, that are considered typical of the negro. They are not. They are typical of men with low ideals. I have seen black men with faces as fine as the best Europeans, and I am sure that the features of a man's face are apt to be altered by his mode of life and his thoughts. Of course, it is his thoughts that do it, but his thoughts are produced by his environment. He is a wonderful man who is able to rise above the degrading environment forced upon

Photo by] [*A. Duperty & Son, Jamaica.*

GOING TO MARKET.

[*Face page 98.*

him by circumstances. Up to the present the negro has been handicapped, and when I see a black man with a fine face, in my mind, I make him obeisance. He has come up a long way, far, far farther than his white prototype.

And his unwilling forebears were brought to Jamaica by the accursed Middle Passage.

It was so called because a ship went from England or America to the Guinea Coast, thence to the West Indies or wherever there was a market for slaves, which was seldom at her home port, and thence back empty to refit. Hence the Middle Passage, a term which, before I investigated the matter, always puzzled me.

The horrors of the Middle Passage were of no account to the men who did the trading. It was an uncomfortable job, as the Dutch Skipper Clause found, but there was money in it, men were not very tender even of each other in olden days, and they counted as little the pains suffered by the luckless people whom they held in bondage. Says Montesquieu, who was before his time, "Slavery is not good in itself. It is useful neither to the master nor the slave. Not to the slave because he can do nothing from virtuous motives. Not to the master, because he contracts among his slaves all sorts of bad habits, and accustoms himself to the neglect of all the moral virtues. He becomes haughty, passionate, obdurate, vindictive, voluptuous, and cruel." He might have added that the men who made the slaves held a still worse position. Once we begin to investigate, we find that the captains of the slavers were almost invariably ruthlessly cruel.

Not quite all. There is mention made in the American Historical Record of David Lindsay, who in 1740 was trading on the Guinea Coast. Here

is a letter written by one George Scott, who meeting Captain Lindsay at sea on the 13th June 1740, entrusts him with this letter and all his gold. He says he left Annamabu on the 8th May, and he had only reached 39·30° W. No wonder he reports that his voyage is miserable, and he has lost twenty-nine slaves out of a cargo of one hundred and twenty-nine. The surprising thing is that he can report that "the slaves we have now is all recovered."

The ships were tiny. David Lindsay, according to Spear, was in 1752 in command of the brigantine *Sanderson*, "a square stern'd vessel of the burthen of about 40 tons." What a cockle shell! and he, too, writes from "Anamaboe, 28th February 1753. . . . The traid is so dull, it is actually a noof to make a man creasey." He has been obliged to buy a cable, and he begs his owners "not to Blaim me in so doeing. I should be glad I cood come Rite home with my slaves, for my vesiel will not last to proceed farr. We can see daylight al round her bow under deck. However, I hope She will carry me safe home once more. I need not inlarge." So he, too, lay outside the surf at Annamabu, he, too, walked on the bastion and discussed with the factors his chances. Oh, they were plucky men those first slavers, if they were brutes, but Lindsay I do not think was a brute. And on that last day of February 1753, there must have been quite a fleet of slavers. "Heare lyes Captains hamlet, James Jepson, Carpenter, Butler, & Lindsay. Gardner is dun." "firginson," he goes on with a pleasant disregard of the uses of capitals, "is Gon to Leward. All these is Rum ships. . . . I've sent a Small boy to my wife. I conclude with my best Endeavors for Intrust. Gentlemen, your faithful Servant at Comind, David Lindsay.

"*N.B.*—On the whole I never had so much Trouble in all my voiges. I shall rite to barbadoes in a few days." A pleasant letter to come down to us out of the years and written by a slaver too! His officers were sick and so were three of the men in the forecastle, and he feared lest the slaves in the hold, learning how short-handed he was, might rise up and make a bid for their freedom, but worse than all was the leaky condition of the ship. Well for her that she sailed in sunny seas, in the season when hurricanes were hardly to be feared, but I felt a thrill of triumph when on the 17th June of the same year he was able to write from Barbadoes,

"Gentle'n :—These are to acqt of my arrival heare ye Day before yesterday in 10 weeks from Anamaboe. I met on my passage 22 days of very squally winds & continued Rains, so that it beat my sails alto pieces, soe that I was oblige Several Days to have Sails on bent to mend them. The vesiel likewise is all open Round her bows under deck. . . . My slaves is not landed yet; they are 58 in number for owners, all in helth & fatt. I lost one small gall." The health of the slaves does him credit in so small a ship. With my faith in fresh air I cannot help wondering if some of it was not due to that opening round the ship's bows under deck.

After a few more remarks he says, "I left Captain Hamblet at Cape Coast sick. His slaves had rose, and they lost the best of what they had." What happened to the slaves? The slave trade is full of such unfinished stories.

There is another letter from Annamabu from one George Scott. "We have now aboard one hundred and no gold. I think to purchase about twenty & go off ye coast: ye time of ye year [it was April], don't doe to tarry much longer. Everything of

provisions is very dear and scarce: it costs for water Ten shillings for one day. I think to stay in this place but fourteen days more. We shall go to Shama and water our vessel."

Shama or Chama is another slave castle about half a day's journey from Sekondi. Grim high walls surround it, and the only entrance is approached by the wide steps in a half circle, steps that we so often see approaching the entrance to an old house in Jamaica. At the Hyde there were the same sort of circular steps that I met at Chama, but at Chama they came up to a narrow entrance that two men, in those days, might hold for a week against great odds.

This slaver goes on to say he thinks he will sail off the coast from Chama with about 120 slaves cargo. "We have left about two hundred pound sterg in goods which wont sell here to any profitt. Every man slave that we pay all Goods for here, costs twelve pounds sterg prime. I hope I shall be in Barbadoes ye latter end of June but have not concluded whither we shall go to Jamaica or Virginia; our slaves is mostly large. 60 men and boys, 20 women, the rest boys and girls, but three under four foot high. Pray excuse all blunders and bad writing for I have no time to coppy, the sloop being under sail."

I like the last touch, the slaver captain who copied out his letters so that they should be neat when he had time and was not ashamed to own it. I hope he was as careful of his human cargo.

The getting of that cargo was not always accomplished, as Phillips did it, by the simple process of going to the "trunk" and buying those he wanted. Clarkson, when he was seeking evidence to justify the suppression of the slave trade, told a tale of

wicked treachery by white men, Englishmen, I am sorry to say, who found trade bad at Old Calabar.

There lay in the River the ships *Indian Queen*, *Duke of York*, *Nancy* and *Concord* of Bristol, the *Edgar* of Liverpool, and the *Canterbury* of London, slavers all, and the slaves were not coming in in this year 1767. Therefore they planned among themselves as coolly as if the black men had been deer or elephants, or pheasants, how they might best fill their between decks. The Calabar River is hot and it is unhealthy, for the percentage of moisture in the air is so great that very gladly I have sat over a fire when the thermometer registered over 90° in the shade, so that it is hardly a pleasant place of residence for a white man. Also the old inhabitants were not very tender of each other, or very careful of human life, for as I sat there watching a most glorious sunset a woman, who had come there in the early days, and she was not then, I think, fifty, told me how she hated to walk along the shore—the Calabar River is really an arm of the sea—because of the living sacrifices, generally young girls offered to the envious gods and bound to stakes, waiting for the tide to come up and put an end to their misery. Still the blood-thirstiness of the natives does not excuse that of the slavers. I only mention it because I find that while the advocates for slavery painted the slave in the blackest colours, the opponents generally depicted the poor black man as a noble martyr. He wasn't. He was suffering humanity neither better nor worse than his station in life allowed, often rising to heights of heroism, but often out-heroding his tormentors in blackguardism.

It happened there was a quarrel at that time between Old and New Calabar, and the captains of the vessels, says Clarkson, "joined in sending

several letters to the inhabitants of Old Town, but particularly to Ephraim Robin John who was at that time a grandee of the place. The tenor of these letters was that they were sorry that any jealousy or quarrel should subsist between the two parties; that if the inhabitants of Old Town would come on board, they would afford them security and protection; adding at the same time that their intention in inviting them was that they might become mediators and thus heal their disputes. The inhabitants of Old Town, happy to find their differences were likely to be accommodated, joyfully accepted the invitation. The three brothers of the grandee just mentioned, the eldest of whom was Amboe Robin John, first entered their canoe, attended by twenty-seven others, and being followed by nine canoes, directed their course to the *Indian Queen*. They were dispatched from thence the next morning to the *Edgar*, and afterwards to the *Duke of York*.

They went on board the last ship, leaving their canoe and attendants by the side of the vessel. These, of course, were important men. A chief on the Coast now carries a silver-headed stick as a badge of rank, is clad in the richest silken robe, and is as far above the rank and file as is the Duke of Devonshire above the labourer cleaning Piccadilly. And these men of rank being well received and fêted on board the slavers, the rest of the canoes went with confidence to the other ships of the fleet. And then the white brutes worked their wicked will. The men on deck fired on the canoe lying alongside, she filled and sank, and the wretched attendants were either killed or drowned or taken as slaves, while their masters, guests of honour in the white man's saloon, fared no better. The captain, mates, and some of the crew of the

Duke of York, armed with pistols and cutlasses, rushed on the unfortunates, doubtless sitting drinking rum, and they made for the stern windows; but they were wounded and helpless and were promptly put in irons.

The *Duke of York* having given the signal, most of the other ships followed her example, and the inhabitants of New Town, concealed in the mangrove swamps along the shore, where the monkeys play and the grey parrots call, came out of their hiding-places and joined in the ghastly fray. And the lust of killing got hold of the aggressors. The ships' boats were manned, and joined themselves to the canoes from New Town. They pursued the fleeing men from Old Calabar, and they apparently forgot the object for which they had lured these men to the ships, and killed at least as many of the men of the Old Town as they enslaved.

And then came a canoe with the principal men from New Town to the *Duke of York*, demanding Amboe Robin John, the brother of the "grandee" of the rival town. And Amboe Robin John pleaded pitifully for his life. He put the palms of his hands together and beseeched and prayed his captor not so to violate the rights of hospitality. But he spoke to deaf ears. The captain of the *Duke of York* only wanted a slave, and the men of New Town offered him one, named Econg, in exchange, and they forced their enemy into the canoe and struck off his head, and the slaver put in his place the man named Econg, who, like the thirty pieces of silver traded so long ago, was the price of blood.

Was ever there a more atrocious story of treachery? Nothing happened to those white men whereas when a slave struck for liberty in Jamaica—but I have told this story just because presently I shall have occasion

to tell of slave risings in Jamaica, and if the slaves were fiendishly cruel—and they were—nothing can exceed the cruelty of the white men who first brought them hither. Clarkson says that the deputy town-clerk of Bristol, Mr Burges, said that he only knew of one captain from the port in the slave trade who did not deserve to be hanged.

Perhaps the fate of those men of Old Calabar, whose dead bodies were washed up on the sands and caught in the mangrove swamps, was the most merciful, for those who were taken on board the ships truly had a terrible time. From the very beginning the last thing the slavers considered was the comfort of the slaves. No, "comfort" is the wrong word to use, such a word as comfort from the days of Queen Elizabeth to those of Victoria, was a word not in the language as far as the slaves were concerned. No one ever thought to see that these men and women, these living beings, to put them on the very lowest rung of the ladder, were likely to be free from discomfort, nay, free from actual pain. Spear tells how he read of "the new slaver built at Warren in the country of Bristole in the colony of Rhode Island, that was three feet ten inches between decks," and Clarkson, who went up and down the country collecting information about the slavers and their doings, tells us of two little sloops which were fitting out for Africa, the one only of 25 tons which was said to be destined to carry seventy, and the other of only 11 tons which was to carry thirty slaves, and these were not to be used as tenders bringing small parties down the rivers to the bigger ships, but were to sail for the West Indies with the slaves themselves, and on their arrival, one if not both, were to be sold as pleasure boats. Then he gives the dimensions. In the larger one each slave "must sit down all the

voyage, and contract his limbs within the narrow limits of 3 square feet, while in the smaller, each slave had 4 square feet to sit in, but since the height between decks was only 2 feet 8 inches, his head must touch the deck above. When the matter was investigated in Parliament, it was stated that if the space between decks in a slaver reached 4 feet—it never seems to have exceeded 5 feet 8 inches—they invariably put up a shelf to the width of 5 feet, so that another layer of slaves might be placed on top of the first. The men were ironed together two and two by the ankles, and sometimes their wrists were handcuffed together, and a chain usually fastened the irons to ringbolts, either on the deck above or below. The women and children were left unironed, and the men were stowed forward and the women aft. If they could get a cargo—and they generally waited on that sweltering coast, rolling in the surf, until they did—the slaves covered the entire deck." In Parliament, at the end of the eighteenth century, they took the dimensions of the slaver *Brookes*, picking her at haphazard from a long list of slavers given them. They found that if each man was allowed 6 feet by 1 foot 4 inches, every woman 5 feet by 1 foot 4 inches, every boy 5 feet by 1 foot 2 inches, and every girl 4 feet 6 inches by 1 foot, they could stow in her 432. There is a plan given in Clarkson's book with every slave in place, and you could not put a pin between them. Certainly it was utterly impossible for any one to move amongst them, at least I should have said so. And yet it was proved that on a previous voyage the *Brookes* had carried no less than 609 slaves! And the slave ships were on the coast, the stifling Guinea Coast, from three to ten months, and from six to ten weeks crossing the Atlantic. It was quite possible for a slave to be on board in that

ghastly stinking slave deck, stinking is a mild word to use for so foul a den, for over a year. In this place they must stay for at least sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, when the weather was bad, or even when it was wet, they were kept there for days together. Nothing that breathed, it seems to me, but must have died in such a place. It was stated in Parliament that "if the ship was full their situation was terribly distressing. They sometimes drew their breath with anxious and laborious efforts, and some died of suffocation."

"Thus crammed together like herrings in a barrel," said Sir William Dolben, "they contracted putrid and fatal disorders, so that they who came to inspect them," (how could they inspect them save by tramping over them), "in the morning had occasionally to pick dead slaves out of their rows, and to unchain their carcases from the bodies of their wretched fellow sufferers to whom they had been fastened."

We do well to remember too, that there were no sanitary arrangements upon a slave ship. All the calls of Nature had to be performed upon the spot to which the wretched beings were shackled. And when they were sea sick——

But no words of mine can convey the horror of it.

These unhappy people were allowed a pint of water a day each, and were fed twice a day upon yams and horse beans. Also, since it was absolutely necessary that they should have exercise for their health's sake, they were obliged after each meal to jump up and down, or dance in their shackles, and if they did not do so—I can imagine they hardly felt inclined for that form of amusement—they were whipped until they did, and the same stimulus was used to make them sing!

And yet it was possible to arrive at their final

destination with only the loss of 1 or 2 per cent., and Captain Hugh Crow, the one-eyed slaver of Liverpool, says Spear, by daily washings, good food, and keeping them amused by playing on musical instruments, did it, and one, Captain John Newton, returned thanks in church, because he had performed the voyage from Africa without the loss of a single man.

But these were in the days when the trade was counted, according to John Newton, "genteel employment," when the rich ship owners of Liverpool and Bristol had no more shame in owning slavers than nowadays they have in taking passengers to America, or trading to Sicily for oranges and wine.

But care such as Hugh Crow took was, I am afraid, rare, and terrible are the tales of the utter brutality suffered in addition to the overcrowding, the filth and the agonies of seasickness which already was the lot of the human cattle.

Clarkson tells the story of the ship *Zong*—Captain Luke Collingwood, and Captain Luke Collingwood seems to have been a devil incarnate. Unluckily, he was not the only one in the trade.

On one day early in September 1781, the *Zong* sailed from the island of St Thomas, bound for Jamaica, with 440 slaves on board, and she arrived off the coast short of water. But Collingwood made the mistake of thinking he was off Hayti, and seeing that the slaves were sickly, and indeed had suffered much from want of water, he and his mate, James Kelsall, decided that since the slaves were sickly—sickly was probably a mild term to use since sixty of them had already died—it would be well to jettison the cargo, or some of it. For the death rate had been so great the voyage was likely to be unprofitable, and if he could prove that some of the cargo had been thrown overboard

to save the rest, the underwriters would pay the value of it, while if these slaves died on board the ship would be at the loss. They selected accordingly 132 of the most sickly of the slaves. Fifty-four of these were there and then thrown overboard to the sharks that swarmed round the ship, and forty-two went the same way the next day, and in the course of the next three days the remaining twenty-six were brought out of the den below to complete the tale of the victims. Poor, wretched, suffering creatures! They looked at the sea, at the sinister fins appearing above the oily swell, and they looked back at their prison and the pitiless white faces that looked down upon them, and then they made their choice. Sixteen, they say, were thrown overboard by the officers, but the rest leaped into the bloody sea where the sharks were already fighting for their meal and shared their fate.

The plea that was set up on behalf of this atrocious act of wickedness was that the captain discovered, when he made the proposal, that he had only 200 gallons of water on board, and that he had missed his port. It was proved, however, in answer to this that no one had been put upon short allowance; and that rain fell and continued for three days immediately after the second lot of slaves had been thrown overboard. They might have filled all their barrels and done away with all necessity—if one could call it necessity—for the murder of the third lot. As a matter of fact they only troubled to fill six.

But the underwriters refused to pay, and the Solicitor-General actually held that the captain of the ship had an "unquestionable right" to throw the slaves into the sea. But not all men agreed with him. Light was coming, and Lord Mansfield,

presiding in the higher court, said that this was a shocking case, and, in spite of the law, decided in favour of the underwriters. Still, nothing apparently was done to the murderers. They went scot-free. But imagine the state of public opinion when such a case could actually be brought before the courts, when the perpetrators of such a crime evidently regarded themselves as agents, doing their very best for those who had entrusted their business to their charge.

But once the trade was outlawed, and the vigilant warships were ever on the watch, life was still more cruel for the unfortunate chattel. Then, to run as many slaves as possible, and to make up for possible losses, the slaves were compelled to lie on their sides, breast to back, spoon fashion, and this when the space between decks was less than two feet. When it was as much as two feet they were stowed, says Spear, "sitting up in rows, one crowded into the lap of another, with legs on legs like riders on a crowded toboggan. In storms the sailors had to put on the hatches, and seal tight the openings into the infernal cesspool. It was asserted by the naval officers who were stationed on the Coast to stop the traffic that in certain states of the weather they could detect the odour of a slaver farther away than they could see her on a clear night. The odour was often unmistakable at a distance of five miles down the wind."

And to what lengths these brutes might go we may see in the case of the *Gloria*, given by Drake in his *Revelations of a Slave Smuggler*, and quoted by Spear. The surgeon tells the tale.

The *Gloria* was coming from the Cape Verde Islands in ballast when she overhauled a Portuguese schooner with a full cargo of slaves. The captain

of the *Gloria*, as thorough a scoundrel surely as ever sailed the seas, filled up his men with rum, attacked the schooner, murdered her officers and crew and one passenger, stole the gold, transferred the slaves to his own ship and scuttled the other. Dead men and sunken ships tell no tales, and 190 slaves as witnesses counted as naught in those days.

Then Ruiz the captain, I'm glad he wasn't an Englishman, bought 400 negroes on the Dahomean Coast and "hauled our course for the Atlantic voyage. But this was to be my last trip in the blood-stained *Gloria*. Hardly were we out a fortnight before it was discovered that our roystering crew had neglected to change the sea water, which had served as our ballast in the lower casks, and which ought to have been replaced with fresh water in Africa. We were drawing from the last casks before this discovery was made, and the horror of our situation sobered Captain Ruiz. He gave orders to hoist the precious remnant abaft the main grating, and made me calculate how long it would sustain the crew and cargo. I found that half a gill a day would hold out to the Spanish main; and it was decided that, in order to save our cargo, we should allow the slaves a half gill and the crew a gill each a day. Then began a torture worse than death to the blacks. Pent in their close dungeons, to the number of nearly five hundred, they suffered continual torment. Our crew and drivers were unwilling to allow even the half gill per diem, and quarrelled fiercely over their own stinted rations. Our cargo had been stowed on the platforms closer than I ever saw slaves stowed before or since. Instead of lowering buckets of water to them, as was customary, it became necessary to pour the water

into half-pint measures. These farthest from the gratings never got a drop. . . . In a short time at least a hundred men and women were shackled to dead partners."

It is a ghastly picture. Perhaps we could not expect any pity for the sufferings of the "cargo" from such a set of pirates. Everyone who was free on board drank hard "as well as myself," said the frank narrator, and they did not trouble to throw the dead overboard, or presumably even to unshackle the living, for the captain finding his crew out of hand, ordered the hatches down, and "swore he would make the run on our regular water rations, and take the chances of his stock."

Three days those fiends continued their course, drinking in plenty, while "the negroes suffocated below." And then came retribution swift and sure.

"Ruiz and four of the men were taken suddenly ill with a disease that baffled my medical knowledge. Their tongues swelled and grew black; their flesh turned yellow, and in six hours they were dead. The first mate went next, and then three others of the crew, and a black driver whose body became leprous with yellow spots. I began to notice a strange fetid smell pervading the vessel, and a low heavy fog on deck, almost like steam. Then the horrid truth became apparent. Our rotting negroes under hatches had generated the plague, and it was a malaria or death mist I saw rising. At this time all our men but three and myself had been attacked; and we abandoned the *Gloria* in her long boat, taking the remnant of water, a sack of biscuit, and a rum beaker, with what gold dust and other valuables we could hastily gather up. We left nine of our late comrades dead and five dying on the *Gloria's* deck."

I have only read the extract that Spear gives in his book, but if it is true—and it may well be—judging by what I have read elsewhere—this ship's surgeon appears to have been a pretty considerable villain himself. The "cargo," I suppose, must have been dead. It was hardly likely one could have survived so long without water in the tropics, but what about the dying comrades he abandoned on the decks?

As a matter of fact, the slavers themselves often did so suffer, for it is hardly possible to generate disease, live over it, and escape scot-free. One of the most ghastly cases is that of the French slaver *Rodeur*.

In the year in which Queen Victoria was born, she was on her way to the West Indies with 162 slaves, when ophthalmia appeared among them. Probably it was not treated properly, but in any case, crowded as they were between decks, it was bound to spread rapidly, and at last, the captain with a view to saving the majority repeated the horror of the *Zong*, and threw thirty-six of them, the ones of least value, I presume, alive to the sharks. But this living sacrifice did not stop the disease. As it was bound to, being a filth disease, it spread to the crew, and presently there was but one man among the crew who could see. And this one man steering, and with all the work of the ship upon his shoulders, saw with thankfulness a sail, and steered towards her. But there was something strange about that sail. As he approached the ship he saw she was drifting as if derelict, though men were wandering about her decks. And she, too, was a slaver. On the *Rodeur* they might have known that by the smell, if custom had not deadened in them that sense. In answer to a hail the crew of the stranger came crowding to the rail begging, praying for aid, and

everyone on board that ship was blind. She was, they said, the Spanish slaver *Leon*, and among their slaves, too, ophthalmia had broken out, and had spread to the crew, and there they lay rolling on the Atlantic helpless.

But what was the good of prayers and cries, and bribes, and wild appeals for help. One man who could see had as much as he could do to steer his own ship to port, for the disease was creeping upon him, and tradition says that he, too, went blind when he reached haven, and of the Spanish slaver *Leon*, with all her crew and all her slaves, no man ever heard again.

But the white men, at least, took the risks with their eyes open; upon the blacks, it had been forced, and no wonder the wretched cargo in their hopeless misery tried rebelling, though rebellion meant death to all concerned, and often, to some who had absolutely nothing to do with it.

Take the story told by the surgeon of the slaver *Little Pearl*, which sailed from the Coast in 1786. The chief mate used to beat the men slaves in season and out of season. One night he heard a noise and jumped down amongst them with a lantern. On the *Brookes* there wouldn't have been room for a lantern, and I doubt if there was more on the *Little Pearl*. Two of the slaves forced themselves out of their irons, and seizing him, began to strike him with these, their only weapons. His cries brought the crew to his aid, we can imagine how mercilessly they trampled on the slaves in that confined space to do it, and they got him out, and the "cargo" began one of those hopeless struggles for freedom which could only end one way. At least, as a rule, it did. They were still on the Coast, and the thought that they were near their homes, probably gave added

vigour to the arms of those who fought. The crew fired down upon them, careless of whom they might hurt. In truth, there was hardly anything else they could do, for, if the slaves got the upper hand, it would have been "Good-night," as far as the white men were concerned. Next morning they were brought up one by one, and then it was found a boy had been killed. Only the two men who had first broken their bonds did not come with the others. They found their way into the hold, and armed themselves with knives from a cask that had been opened for trade. Oh, the forlorn hope! If they had been white men someone would have enthused over their pluck and valour, but they were only two negro slaves. One was persuaded to come up by a negro trader calling to him in his own tongue, and the moment he appeared on deck, one of the crew, "supposing him to be yet hostile," shot him dead. The other held that hold for twelve hours! They mixed scalding water with fat and poured it down upon him to make him come up, but, "though his flesh was painfully blistered," by these means he kept below. A promise was then made to him in the African tongue by the same trader that no injury should be done him if he would come amongst them. To this at length he consented. But, on observing when he was about half way up that a sailor was armed between decks, he flew to him and threw him down. The sailor fired his pistol in the scuffle, but, without effect; he contrived, however, to fracture his skull with the butt end of it, so that the slave died on the third day. Mercifully. Though we are left in the dark as to his sufferings before he died, but we may judge of them by the way the same men treated a boy when they arrived at their destination in the West Indies.

There was a boy slave on board, says Clarkson, who was very ill and emaciated. Now the rule in slavers was that each officer of the ship was allowed one or more slaves for his own benefit, according to his rank. But the slaves were not given to them. When they were sold, the total amount brought in was added together and then divided by the number of slaves sold, and in that way each officer took his share in money. Therefore, if a slave were sold for a trifling amount, he brought down the value of the officers' slaves. The chief mate objected to this boy being sold. He would only bring down the average. His objection was allowed. It was a natural one. Therefore, the boy was kept on board, and not exposed for sale, but no provisions were allowed him, and the mate suggested he should be thrown overboard. No one would do this, however, though they could quite easily watch him starving to death before their eyes. And starve he did, and on the ninth day died, "having never been allowed any sustenance during that time." And this in a tropical island where the fruits of the earth could be bought for the merest trifle. It seems impossible that men should have been so fiendishly cruel, but the evidence is overwhelming. The times were hard, and we know that Wilberforce, who championed so well the slave, turned a deaf ear to the sufferings of the British labourer. Still, two wrongs do not make a right, and, without doubt, the black people stolen away for slaves were treated by many with a whole-hearted callousness that is hard to believe in these times.

They had all sorts of means of coercion. Clarkson found openly exposed for sale, in a shop in Liverpool, the handcuffs and the leg irons with which one slave was shackled to another, also a thumbscrew, and an instrument like a brutal pair of scissors with screws

at the end instead of looped handles. This was pushed in a mouth obstinately kept shut, tearing lips and breaking teeth, then forcibly opened and kept open with a screw, so that the unfortunate who wished to end his miseries by starvation might be fed.

That this was used fairly often there is no doubt. There is the testimony of Captain Frazer, accounted one of the most humane men in the trade. It had been said of him that he had held hot coals to the mouth of a recalcitrant slave to compel him to eat. He was questioned on this point but he denied it, and presently—I am telling the tale as the great abolitionist told it—the true story came out.

"Being sick in my cabin, I was informed that a man slave would neither eat, drink, nor speak. I desired the mate and surgeon to try and persuade him to speak. I desired that the slaves might try also. When I found he was still obstinate, not knowing whether it was from sulkiness or insanity, I ordered a person to present him with a piece of fire in one hand and a piece of yam in the other, and to tell me what effect this had upon him. I learned that he took the yam and began to eat it, but he threw the fire overboard."

These were the tender mercies of the kind. Few slaves could expect so much consideration.

There was a slave ship once struck on Morant Keys, not far from the east end of Jamaica—again I get my information from Clarkson. The crew, taking care of their own skins, landed in their boats with arms and provisions, and with incredible brutality —save that nothing a slaver did would now strike me as incredible—left the slaves on board still in their irons. This was in the night; and when morning broke they saw that the slaves, who must have been capable men, had not only managed to get free, but

were busy making rafts on which they placed the women and children, swimming themselves beside the rafts, and guiding them as they drifted towards the island whereon were the crew. They should have been hailed as heroes and helped, but the crew were afraid—whether rightly or wrongly I cannot say. Certainly you could hardly expect men who had been left heavily ironed to drown, to deal very tenderly with the men who had calmly acquiesced in their death. At any rate, the story goes the white men feared, not that the black men would attack them, but that they would consume the water and provisions that had been landed. They resolved to destroy them as they approached the shore, and they killed between three and four hundred; and out of the whole cargo only thirty-three were saved to be brought to Kingston and sold.

To me it is a strange thing that I cannot explain to myself, that our pity is more easily aroused by the story of one individual case than by the tale of suffering in the mass. It was an awful thing to leave those helpless people confined and shackled, and at the mercy of the winds and waves; it was still worse to shoot them down when by their own pluck and intrepidity they had succeeded in saving themselves. There were little children amongst them, and they too must have been shot down; they too must have raised despairing little hands to brutes who knew not the meaning of the word pity. But somehow even that, terrible as it is, pales before the conduct of a brutal slaver, the last I shall tell of the many brutalities of the Middle Passage. It was told in Parliament at the end of the eighteenth century, told probably reluctantly, for much of the evidence was dragged out of unwilling witnesses who feared for themselves. They were surgeons, or ships' officers,

or seamen, and their livelihood depended upon their keeping in with captains and shipowners.

There was a baby of ten months old, a chubby little round-faced helpless thing. It "took sulk and would not eat," Clarkson puts it. How should it eat when what it wanted was milk, and what it got was rice or pulse, poor baby. And that tiny child that brutal monster flogged with a "cat," swearing he would make it eat or kill it. "From this and other ill-treatment," says Clarkson, not specifying the ill-treatment, "the child's legs swelled. He then ordered some water to be made hot to abate the swelling. But even his tender mercies were cruel, for the cook, putting his hand in the water, said it was too hot. Upon this the captain swore at him, and ordered the feet to be put in. This was done. The nails and skin came off. Oiled cloths were then put round them." And then, as if that were not enough, the child was tied to a heavy log, and apparently the brute who had charge of his destinies forgot all about it for a little while. It must have eaten something, perhaps its mother had a little, for the captain did not notice it for two or three days; then its pitiful crying, I suppose, called his attention to it, and he "caught it up again and repeated that he would make it eat or kill it. He immediately flogged it again, and in a quarter of an hour it died."

Now I am aware that cases of individual cruelty may happen at any time in any place. But against that is the fact that this brutality was committed openly upon the deck of the slaver, the officers and crew saw it, and not one of them raised a hand to help a helpless baby who was being cruelly done to death. More—when the story came out nothing was done to the man who has left such a memorial behind him, and no one seemed surprised at this.

I apologise for this chapter, it is so full of horrors. But seeing the people who have made Jamaica their own, writing about them I am of necessity compelled to tell the whole story, for it seems to me they cannot be properly understood—their kindliness, their subserviency, their cheerfulness, even their insolence and their dishonesty—unless we examine the way in which their forbears first came to Jamaica.

CHAPTER VI

THE PLANTATION

I CAN hardly say it too often—in reading about the slaves and their sufferings we must remember that past ages had different standards, and that, although undoubtedly the slaves suffered horribly it was the custom of the times, and other people suffered as well. Even at the beginning of this century, coming to England from a land where the working man could always make enough to keep himself in decency and comfort, I was shocked and horrified at the condition of the poorer classes in the great cities of England. In London, in Liverpool, in the Five Towns, and more particularly in Sheffield, was I dismayed at the low standard of the working man or woman. It seemed to me they were slaves in a bitter cold and cheerless country, and as far as I could see, for I had my living to earn and no time to investigate, they had no hope of bettering their condition.

And my Australian eyes were not the only ones that saw the people so. E. Nesbit, who writes so charmingly, once wrote a story in which the children, either by means of a magic carpet or a reanimated phœnix, brought back Queen Semiramis to visit the earth and took her for a ride on top of an omnibus through the London streets.

"How badly you keep your slaves?" said the Queen.

"Oh, there are no slaves in England," said the children. I quote from memory but this is the gist of the story.

"Stuff and nonsense, children!" said the Queen. "Don't tell me! Think I don't know a slave when I see him!"

E. Nesbit is quite right. We cannot see fairly and in their true colours the things to which use has deadened our sensibilities. It must have seemed quite natural for the planters of Jamaica to be pleased when a slave ship arrived. The news would go round at once, and as the ships were not very big they came to ports that only a coaster visits nowadays. To Kingston, of course, to Montego Bay, but they also went to Savanna la Mar and to Black River and other places that dream idly in the sunshine now and get their stores by motor boats and schooners.

Probably the planter grumbled and growled and said the stench of such a ship was enough to knock you down, and that he hated the job, but he had to have hands, and in a way he enjoyed the outing and the gathering together of his own kind. No one, I think, for one moment thought of the sufferings of the slaves; they grumbled, as men do nowadays because a pig-stye smells. Occasionally a farmer, wiser than the rest, declares the swine should be kept clean, but one and all, grumblers and wise men, are sure they need bacon. And so it was with the sale of the black cattle.

They were savages. Occasionally, perhaps, a highly bred and educated man from the north might be mixed up with them, but as a rule the slaves imported were the merest barbarians. It is no good thinking they were anything else. It is true enough what the advocates of slavery always maintained, that through their enslaving they did get a glimpse

of better things. An Ashanti woman with her shaven head and a cloth wrapped round her middle, beating fu-fu, is certainly not as far advanced in the social scale as the milkmaid clambering down the steep hillside to Montego Bay and saving her pennies to buy herself smart clothes in which to go to church. But it is also certain that the men who imported her forbears were thinking only of their own convenience.

There was a tremendous cleaning up on board on arrival; salt water was aplenty, and the slaves were doctored, their sores were attended to, and they were given palm oil and coconut oil with which to anoint themselves. They must have been thankful to come out of their cramped quarters and bask on deck in the sunshine, but they must have feared. One historian has left it on record that the planters who came down to buy had often celebrated the arrival and were so gloriously drunk that the scramble for the goods was disgraceful and the unfortunate Helots must have thought they had fallen into the hands of cannibals and were to be despatched forthwith.

The planters, when they were able, visited the ships to see the new importations and decide for which they should bid at the coming sale, but in later times the slaves were taken straight to the vendue master and sold in the public slave market. There used to be a large slave market at Montego Bay, quite close to the water, so that the merchandise might be rowed ashore, and the gentlemen from Success and Contentment and Retrieve, from Iron Shore and Retirement and True Friendship—thus they name plantations in Jamaica—came crowding to fill up the gaps in their hands, to buy Madam a serving wench, or young master a boy to wait upon him.

They stood there in rows, naked savages, men and

women with clean cloths round their loins, and boys and girls stark. Their shackles had generally been struck off because a quiet and peaceable slave was more valued than one who had to be kept in restraint. There were shade trees growing round the market-place, and the sun flickered down through their leaves and made patterns on the shapely dark bodies, and the buyers examined them exactly as they would have examined a horse or a cow they wanted to buy.

The buyers had certain preferences. In spite of an evil reputation, "the Koromantyns," says Bryan Edwards, "are distinguished from all others by firmness both of body and mind, a ferociousness of disposition; but withal, activity, courage, and stubbornness," and this, while it made them dangerous, made them good labourers. The Papams or Whidahs, those who came from the coasts between Accra and all along by Keta and Togoland and Dahomey, "are accounted most docile." The Eboes from Calabar and the swamps round the mouths of the Niger "were valued the least, being feeble, timid, despairing creatures, who not infrequently used to commit suicide in their dejection," which perhaps was not surprising if they could not work and knew what they had to expect if they did not.

The people from the Gaboon country, at the bottom of the Gulf of Guinea, were said to be invariably ill-disposed, and lastly, those from the Congo and farther south from the coasts of Angola, though counted less robust than the other negroes, were more handy as mechanics, and more trustworthy. So the gentlemen, crowding to the sales, had some idea of the quality of the goods they had come to buy.

The value of a slave increased as the years went on. In 1689, I believe, a slave could be bought for £7, but of course £7 was a great deal more money

then than it is now. Then a good negro rose to £20. In 1750 a planter writes, "Bought ten negroes at £50 each"—which, Edwards says, was the common price in 1791; boys and girls cost from £40 to £45, while an infant was worth £5. After that they rose in value rapidly, and before Edwards had finished his history in his estimate of the expenses of a sugar plantation, he values the negroes at £70 apiece; while in 1832, just before the Emancipation, when the planters expected compensation for the loss of their labour, the value of a slave sometimes rose as high as £110 per man.

Because of the perquisites of the officers, only the healthy slaves were offered for sale at first, but the sick, injured, and weakly were by no means wasted. Indeed, even in those hard-bitten times, the disposal of the sickly slaves was often considered a scandal. They were generally bought up by speculators who sometimes tended them, sometimes did not, simply made what they could out of them. If the lot of the healthy slaves was hard, that of the newly arrived and sickly was terrible, till death released them from their sufferings. And in every ship we may be sure there were sick.

I do not find any record of slave risings on the arrival of the ships. It seems as if the black men, dazed and frightened, unaccustomed to their new surroundings, submitted quietly enough. It was not until they were on the estates, had time to look round them, had hoes and knives and machetes put into their hands, that they realised the comparative weakness of the whites, and the chance they had of freedom. They might be met any day, a band of stalwart black savages clad only in loin cloths, the women, apart with their babies seated on their hips, leading older children by the hand, marching along

the white roads, clambering up the steep mountain paths to the estate that was to be their destination, with a white man on horseback following slowly, and one, or two, or three black drivers, according to the number of the new slaves, with whips, old slaves who could be trusted, marshalling them. Sometimes they sang, and always they went better to some sort of music, but I do not think they were often very rebellious. The first bitterness of the enslavement had passed. Here was solid ground beneath their feet again, a companion they were accustomed to, beside them, pleasant sunshine and a cooling breeze, and it might be worth their while to see what the future held for them.

Arrived at the estate, the newcomers were very often handed over individually to some slave accustomed to the plantation, who showed them the ropes, and possibly heard tales of the country from which he had been torn long ago.

They were practically dumb these first comers. They did not understand the language; even the old hands only grasped the words of command, and though they thoroughly understood the uses to which a knife might be put, a hoe they would certainly regard as a woman's implement.

Of course their masters took no heed of that, any more than they considered the slave's feelings when they made over a fierce Ashanti or Mendi warrior to a mild Joloff, or gave a Mandingo from the north, who was likely to be a Mohammedan and might even be able to read and write Arabic, into the charge of an Eboe, who was a savage pure and simple, and probably remained a savage after years of plantation labour. To do them justice, I expect these gentlemen from Amity, or Rose Hall, or Good Hope, had about as much idea of the map of Africa as I have of the

contour of the Antarctic Continent—less very likely; and that these people were separated as widely by the countries of their birth as they themselves were from England, never occurred to them. I don't suppose they would have bothered if it had. But certain differences were forced upon them. And for the proper working of their plantations, they must needs take note of those differences. As a rule, they were not intentionally cruel, but they regarded the slaves as chattels.

There is a story told by Bryan Edwards, to illustrate the superior pluck of the Koromantyns, but it also shows us the standing of a slave very well indeed:—

"A gentleman of my acquaintance who had purchased at the same time ten Koromantyn boys, and the like number of Eboes, the eldest of the whole apparently not more than thirteen years of age—caused them all to be collected and brought before him in my presence to be marked on the breast. This operation is performed by heating a small silver brand, composed of one or two letters, in the flame of spirits of wine, and applying it to the skin which is previously anointed with sweet oil. The application is instantaneous and the pain momentary." So Mr Bryan Edwards but he was in no danger from a branding iron. "Nevertheless, it may be easily supposed that the apparatus must have a frightful appearance to a child. Accordingly, when the first boy, who happened to be one of the Eboes, and the stoutest of the whole, was led forward to receive the mark, he screamed dreadfully, while his companions of the same nation manifested strong emotions of sympathetic terror. The gentleman stopped his hand. But the Koromantyn boys, laughing aloud, and immediately coming forward of their own accord, offered

their bosoms undauntedly to the brand, and receiving its impression without flinching in the least, snapped their fingers in exultation over the poor Eboes."

The natives of Africa are often much worse marked than any small silver brand could mark them merely by way of ornament, and many a time do we see white men who have submitted to the more painful operation of tattooing merely for—well, when I'm put to it I really don't know why a white man allows himself to be tattooed.

You will find it said that the majority of people were good to their slaves, that it was their interest to be good to them. True, but unfortunately we have only to look round us to see how often nowadays a horse, or indeed any helpless creature dependent upon some careless man's good-will, is ill-used, even though ultimately that ill-usage means a loss to the owner. And so it was in Jamaica: a man did the best he could for his slaves, his favourites were pampered, but when it came to a pinch the slaves suffered. There was a terrible famine in Jamaica in the latter half of the eighteenth century; England had decreed that there should be no trade with her revolted colonies, supplies were therefore more restricted than they need have been, and it is recorded that the slaves died by thousands. Again and again we are told how, even in normal times, the slave spent his midday rest hour either in the bush picking berries and wild fruits with which to supplement his scanty fare, or else in searching the rubbish heap at the planters' door for gnawed bones which were ground small and boiled down to get what sustenance there was in them. No one troubled about a slave; some men would get a reputation for ill-treating their slaves, but no one thought of interfering.

Besides, as I have remarked before, the pens and estates were so isolated. Anything might have happened to a slave on one of those estates, and it would have been long before rumour carried the tale to the next estate.

And there was another side of the picture, the side at which the planter looked, especially when he thought of bringing a wife to his lonely Great House set high on a hill-top or a jutting rock. He was surrounded by some hundreds of these alien people, dumbly resentful of their condition—he didn't put it like that—ill-conditioned ruffians he probably called them, and he never knew when the worst might not influence the rest. And they were armed with machetes and knives and hoes and spades, for purposes of agriculture certainly, but agricultural implements make excellent weapons of offence in the hands of a fierce Timini or Krobo warrior. "He travels the fastest who travels alone," as Kipling sings, and many a man thanked God he had no wife or children.

He took to himself one of the dark women, and in later times there were the mulattoes and quadroons to be had for the choosing.

We can easily see why the presence of a white woman was resented upon an estate. If the owner chose to live with some brown or yellow girl he naturally objected to his underlings choosing a mode of life which would be a reproach to him, and if he brought out a wife all those who had no wives felt that Madam exercised an undue espionage over their mode of life.

"In my drive this morning met several of the unfortunate half black progeny of some of our staff," writes Lady Nugent, "all in fine muslin lace, &c., with wreaths of flowers in their hats. What ruin

for these worse than thoughtless, young men." If she wrote thus, she probably did not refrain from comment at the time, and doubtless her comment was resented.

"Soon after my arrival," writes Matthew Lewis, "I asked my attorney" (an attorney in Jamaica is the man who manages the estate for an absentee owner) "whether a clever-looking woman who seemed to have great authority in the house belonged to me."

"'No, she was a free woman.'

"'Was she in my service then?'

"'No, she was not in my service.' I began to grow impatient.

"'But what does she do at Cornwall? Of what use is she in the house?'

"'Why, sir, as to use, of great use, sir'; and then, after a pause, added in a lower voice, 'It is the custom, sir, for unmarried men to have housekeepers, and Nancy is mine.'"

Lewis wrote in the second decade of the nineteenth century a little after Lady Nugent, and putting all these little stories together, we get a complete picture of the Jamaican estate as it must have been for close on two hundred years.

The black people, naked at first and later clad in rags, lived in a little village some distance from the Great House where dwelt their master, and the bond between them was the woman he took from amongst them for his convenience. The villages were of palm-thatched houses with walls of swish or of wattle, and were very often surrounded by a wall, for if the owner valued his privacy so did the dweller in the village, and presently around them grew up a grove of trees planted by the negro sometimes by design, sometimes by accident; there were coconut palms and naseberries, tall leafy trees, and

by the beginning of the nineteenth century, thanks to Bligh and Marshall, breadfruit and mango trees, the handsomest trees, perhaps, that bear fruit, and there were oranges and lemons with their fragrant blossoms.

"I never witnessed on the stage a scene," says Lewis, "so picturesque as a negro village. . . . If I were to decide according to my own taste I should infinitely have preferred their habitations to my own. Each house is surrounded by a separate garden, and the whole village is intersected by lanes bordered with all kinds of sweet-smelling and flowering plants." Certainly he was fortunate. The villages on his estate must have been model ones. I have been up and down the land and I have never seen a negro village that in my eyes did not badly need cleaning up. There is no reason why the houses should not be delightful, but they are not. In those old days, the days long before Lewis, they were a danger, of course. Of sanitation there was none. Even now about a peasant's house in Jamaica there is often an unpleasant smell from the rotting waste that is scattered around; then it must have been much worse, but what could you expect, when the masters themselves regarded bad smells and rotting waste as all in the day's work? In the old slave-trading castles on the Guinea Coast there was always a well in the courtyard, a very necessary precaution, surrounded as the traders were by hostile tribes, but they also buried their dead in the courtyard and it never seems to have occurred to them that by such a practice they might possibly be arranging for a constant supply of graves. Sloane, I think it is, puts it on paper that, but for the John Crows—a small vulture—he does not think the towns in Jamaica would have been habitable.

The fields where the slaves grew cassava and yams and chochos and cocos were usually at some distance from the village, "on the mountain," which meant the rougher and more stony hill ground at a distance from the Great House. According to custom one acre of ground was planted for every five negroes, and they were allowed to work on it one day a week.

And very gradually, the descendants of the naked savages who had been brought so unwillingly came to feel that they belonged to the land—it was their country. It was said that all the outbreaks were led by the newly-imported slaves, and that the Creoles, those born in the colony, were contented enough. They had many wrongs, but undoubtedly they loved the place of their birth, and felt deeply being sent away or sold. They pitied, as from a higher plane, the book-keeper who had to go. It is curious to learn that when a white underling was dismissed, the gangs—these slaves who must stay whether they liked it or not—would sing:

> "Massa turn poor buckra away ho!
> But Massa can't turn poor neger away oh!"

We see that they *must* have looked at their position from a different view-point from that we naturally take now.

I have read through two or three books of records of such estates as Worthy Park and Rose Hall, and in them the slaves are enumerated in exactly the same fashion as the cattle on the next page. The Worthy Park book I found specially interesting. It was an old brown leather-covered book, 18 inches long by 1 foot broad, and round it clung—or so it seemed to me—an unrestful emanation, as if the men who wrote in it were discontented and found life a vexatious thing.

This slave book begins—and the beginning is written in a very clear clerkly hand; I expect my grandmother would have placed the writer's status exactly—with a description of the lands, 3150 acres, held by the original owner of Worthy Park, John Price, Esq., of Penzance, England; he was an absentee owner, and there is no record in the book of his ever having visited his estate. George Doubt was the superintendent, and lived at the Great House; but whether it was he who made those first entries, there is no means of knowing. He certainly did not make them all, for the handwriting varies, and there were no less than six overseers in the five years, the book records, between 1787 and 1792. And the ink and the paper reflect credit on the makers, for though browned with time the writing is perfectly legible, and the pages are stout still.

Once the limits of the estate are laid down, we come to the stock upon it—the negroes, the mules, the horses, the oxen; and every quarter returns were made to the Vestry of the Parish. This, I think, because a tax of 6d. a head had to be paid upon every slave; and for the safety of the public a certain number of white men had to be kept, capable of bearing arms.

The white men were always changing, with the exception of George Doubt, so I conclude either that that superintendent was a hard man, or that John Price, comfortable in his English home, drove him hard: for even for those times the pay seems to have been poor. What Doubt got I do not know, but the overseer got £200 a year, and of course his board and lodging; the surgeon got £140 per annum; the book-keeper and distiller £50 per annum, and the ordinary book-keepers £30 per annum each. It was no catch to be a book-keeper in those days. As

a rule he had nothing to do with books, but he did all the little jobs that could not be entrusted to the slaves. He served out the corn for the feeding of the fowls, kept count of the rats that were killed, and went into the cane-fields with the negro drivers. He had to be out in the fields so early that his breakfast was sent out to him.

A negro wench, complained a long-suffering young man, brought him his breakfast—a bottle of cold coffee, two herrings, and a couple of boiled plantains stuck on a fork. It does not sound luxurious, and £30 a year did not hold out much hope of bettering himself.

Among the stock the negroes come before the cattle, and are described in much the same language.

"A General List of Negroes on, and belonging to, Worthy Park Plantation, taken the 1st January 1787."

The page is divided into three columns, headed respectively, "Names, Qualifications, and Conditions"; and underneath, "Quashie, Head Carpenter, Able," at the top of a long list that is never less than 340 and sometimes rises to 360 names. There were 6 Carpenters, numbering among them Mulatto Aleck, and 2 learning; there were 2 Sawyers, 1 Joiner and Cabinet Maker, 1 Blacksmith, Mulatto John, 1 Mason, Mulatto Billy, and 1 learning, 3 Drivers, 1 man in the Garden who was marked Old and Infirm, 5 Wain men, 3 Boilers, a Head mule man, and 138 others, ending with children too young to be of any use.

The names are various, and do not differ very much from those of the cattle numbered a few pages further on. Prussia, the Head mule man, is Able, Minuith is Distemper'd, and eight Macs, beginning with MacDonald, and ending with MacLean, are all Able. Nero is a field-labourer and Able, and Don't

Care, a wain man, is Able. Further on there is a steer named Why Not? Waller, the Head boiler, is sickly, and Johnston, a field-labourer, is subject to "Fitts." Dryden is Able, but Elderly. Punch and Bacchus are Elderly and Weakly, which seems wrong somehow, and Ishmael is Infirm and a Runaway. Italy is Able, Spain is Distemper'd, and Portugal is Weakly. Germany is Old and Weak. Quaco's Jumbo is subject to Sores, and Creole Cuba's Cuffie is Weakly and a notorious Runaway. Poor Pope is lame in one hand, and so is Homer, while Kent, Duke, Guy, Prince, John, Morrice, and James, are "all of no use, being too young."

Then we come to the women. There are 141 of them, 64 Field Labourers, 44 of whom are Able. Grace is a Driver and Elderly, and Delia and Dilligence are both Elderly. Baddo and Creole Betty are Old and Weakly, Lilly is Elderly and Sickly. Little Dido is "Weakly & Runaway." Woman is Field Cook for the Small Gang, Silvia is Nurse to the young Children in the Field. Luida's Nancy is "Superunuated." Little Yabba is lame in her hip, Chloe is Weakly and Worthless. Little Benebah is Runaway and Worthless, Strumpet is Able, a Runaway—could one expect much from a woman called by such a name?—and that Whore was also Runaway and Worthless seems but a confirmation of the old saying about giving a dog a bad name and hanging him. But Lady, too, is Runaway; perhaps she was sickly and not equal to the work they expected of her. We may judge that the writer who recorded those dead-and-gone black labourers was not a lettered man, for he writes down Psyche, "Sychke." But Psyche has always been a difficulty. Miss Maxwell Hall on Kempshot Pen has a cow so named, and periodically she goes

through her cattle with her headman. She keeps her list and he presents his. Psyche he had written "Sikey," and the young lady coming upon it among the "S's" murmured to herself:—

"Psyche, yes, 'p,' of course." He was an observant man, and the next time the list was presented to her Psyche had been written "Spikey"!

Perhaps the overseer did not do so badly with "Sychke."

Little Abba, a field cook, has lost one hand. Apparently they did not trouble much about the field-labourer's food, hardly more than they did about the book-keeper's. Simbry is Elderly and a Gandy, which appears to have been a midwife. Poor Pallas is weakly. Sicily, old and weakly, cuts grass for the stables; Abbas Moll, Invalid, "Sores," washes the bags. I hope they weren't used for anything important. Olive is blind, and no less than thirteen are "superunuated," while twenty-eight, among them Behaviour, Friendship, and Phebas, are "of no use, being very young." Later on, "Little Friendship's" death of fever and a sore throat is recorded. Here, too, are Quadroon Kitty, Quadroon Molly, and Quadroon Bessy, nearer the white man than the black but still slaves.

George Doubt expended his negroes freely. . . . Thirty negroes, fifteen men and fifteen women, were bought on the 2nd March 1787. They were "late the property of Mr Alex. Stanhope dec'd, bo't of Edward Brailsford, Esq." Why the difference in the titles I don't know. They were all marked "Able" when they were bought, but in 1789 the men are reduced to thirteen, and Toby, who was a Mason, is now old and infirm; England, a sawyer, is old and infirm; Roger, a field negro, is now "little worth"; Dick is sickly and Cæsar is Able,

but evidently he did not like Worthy Park, for he is always running away. Prince, now in the overseer's stables, is of little worth; Cuffie is dead and York is now represented by a little child.

And of the women, Flora is sickly and Delia is dead, and there is a sinister entry against Fidelia—"Died, reduced by lying in the bushes." Why did Fidelia leave her home and lie in the bushes till she was so reduced she died?

But it is just the same tale with the older hands. I would condemn slavery on the Worthy Park slave book alone; and Worthy Park had not the bad reputation Rose Hall had, yet Quashie, who opens the book as able in two years, is old and infirm; Mulatto Aleck is infirm. Mulatto George, then able, is now subject to sores and "Bone ach." Minuith has now become Minute, and from being a carpenter has become a watchman, which means he is good for nothing else. Joan's Cudjoe, the Head sawyer, has against him "Rheumatism," and Darby, the Head Driver, formerly Able, is now "Ruptur'd." Guy's Quashie and Creole Scotland are now both elderly. Pool and Waller the Boilers are sent to the field sometimes, a bitter come-down for them, and are both elderly and infirm. Nero has elephantiasis, Dryden is now cutting grass, M'Pherson is weakly, M'Clean is asthmatic, Don't Care is infirm, Juba's Quashie is dead. Perhaps the new overseer was a harder man, for I noticed that Quaco's Jumbo, who was originally described as "Weakly and a Runaway," is now "Able but a Skulker."

Philip, who was "Able," is now "infirm," and Pope, who only has one hand, is now "Able and Ill-dispos'd," and no mention is made of an infirmity which certainly must severely handicap a slave.

And so it goes on. Villian is "Subject to Fits," and Solomon is "subject to Bone ach," a long list which makes us feel for the weary men and women who must turn out into the field at the blowing of the conch shell.

If you have any imagination at all there are many little pathetic histories in a slave book.

There was Dolly on Worthy Park Estate, entered in 1787 as in the overseer's house. She had a baby, Mulatto Patty, in all probability the daughter of the overseer. If she was he goes away and leaves her a slave on the plantation, for she is entered every year to the end of the record as "healthy, but too young to work." Work is all that is expected of the white man's daughter. Poor little Patty! Her mother's two next children are presumably black, as their colour is not mentioned, which it would have been had they had any white blood in their veins; and presently poor Dolly is a field-labourer again, fallen from her high estate. For in Jamaica the house-servant ranks high in the social scale. That is why, I think, that the house-servants in Jamaica generally wear a handkerchief over their heads. The white bondservants did so because it was the custom of the time, and the black woman promoted from the field put a kerchief over her head and wore it as a sign of her higher social standing. The custom is dying hard, and it is a pity it should die at all, for the negro woman's hair is not her strong point and it is better covered.

Then Fogo, also in the overseer's house, had a boy named Charles Dale, and Charles Dale is the blacksmith upon the estate, but there is no record of little Charles being freed. In truth the father never counted. In a record of forty births on Worthy

Park never once is he mentioned. The births are put down on one side of the page as "Increase of the Negroes," and the baby is only mentioned because he is an asset, as he takes turn with the notice that so many negroes have been bought. On the other side of the page is invariably "Increase of Stock," kept on exactly the same lines.

In the Rose Hall slave books, thirty years later in date, the births are put casually among the daily occurrences, just as the runaways are mentioned, or the fact that a certain runaway "Cæsar" or "Arabella" is "brought home." And, perhaps, in the whole pitiful list in all the books, the only entry that looks well is that Betty Madge on Worthy Park has many young children and does not work.

The last man who makes entries in this book is rather fond of a gentle reproach. I don't like him, and I don't think the negroes could have liked him either, though I only judge by the handwriting and his brief remarks.

"Pheba Girl," for instance, is "Able but a sad skulker," and Lady is a "sad runaway." Psyche has become "Sickie" and is sickly, and Belinda, who two years ago was a child, is now in the field. Poor little girl! Her life of labour has begun. It gave me great satisfaction to find that Congo Betty, who in the beginning was entered as "Able but a Runaway," in 1789 ran away for good, apparently, for when the book closed she had not returned, having been absent for over two years. I hope she had not died, but was happy and comfortable in the hills. Perhaps she joined the Maroons, but I fear me not even her own people were likely to be kind to an elderly woman.

Others ran away, but they came back, poor things. Cæsar and Lady and Villian and Mary and October

ran away all at one time. No mention is ever made of their return, but they did come back, for later they are served with clothing, and are mentioned in the lists of negroes on the estate. Man is a gregarious animal, and, I suppose, these poor things, skulking in the woods and mountains, missed their fellows, and so they dared the stocks and the lock-up and the stripes, which were sure to be their portion when they did come back. Lady came back once, for in June 1788 she had a baby girl. In January 1791 she is among the invalids and superannuated. But life among the sick evidently did not suit her—it probably was no bed of roses—for in the following September she left her three-years-old Diana and ran away, and when the book closed three months later she was still away.

Though, apparently, they superannuated the slaves very young, we may be very sure they did not superannuate them before they were actually obliged, so that we find they were old and useless when they should have been in their prime. A slave had no proper stimulus to labour. As a rule, he was assured of enough to eat when he was too old to labour, and practically he had little more at any stage of his career.

The deaths, of course, came in under "Decrease of Negroes," and they died so often of "Old Age," poor things, that I wonder what constituted "Old Age" in those days. But sometimes they died of "yaws," and "a consumption," and "Pluresy." Sometimes the children died of "Worm fever," of "Locked Jaw," "of Fever and Sore Throat," "of Cold and Sore Throat," and Little Prince was drowned. One of the men named Dick has my sincerest sympathy. He is bought from Brailsford as "Able," a couple of years later he is "sickly,"

then he has "Bone ach," and finally on the 1st April 1791 he is entered as "Died of a sudden death," which is crossed out, and "an Asthma" put instead. He evidently struggled in agonising fashion at intervals, till at length his heart gave out and he was at peace.

And one of the sad untold stories of the book lies behind the entry on the 24th January 1791: "By Hang'd himself in the woods, one of the new negro men bought of Rainford." He had been bought on the 5th of the same month, and he waited hopelessly, or perhaps hoping, nineteen days, and then he ended it, because for a slave there was no future to which it was worth looking forward. He is entered in the book as remorselessly and as carefully as the steer Hymen who "broke his neck in the Penn."

Very occasionally does the decrease of the slaves come from the slaves being freed. But once or twice it does. In the year 1787 Mulatto Nelly and Quadroon Kitty and Quadroon Bessy were "manumized," and Mulatto Nelly is sent away. Perhaps the father desired to cut off from his little daughters all slave influence, even that of their mother; for I presume Nelly was their mother. And I wonder were the little girls the daughters of Mr Doubt, for really it does not look as if the other men could afford to free their children.

They do not give us an inventory of the furniture of the Great House, but in the overseer's house most things are set down when the book opens. In the hall, in addition to tables and chairs and a "Beaufett," they had six silver tablespoons and five silver teaspoons, five cups and saucers, fifteen wine-glasses, four tumblers, and one wine decanter. In the overseer's room he had a mahogany bed and a small mahogany bed, and, of course, a feather bed—every

room except the hall had one of these luxuries. In August in Jamaica! With the shutters close for fear of the slaves!! In the Great House at the Hyde the bedrooms were strangely small and confined when compared with the hall out of which they opened, and I said so once to the doctor. He laughed. He knew his old-time Jamaica.

"The men who built in those times," said he, "didn't worry about bedrooms. The dining-hall was the thing! They sat there and drank rum punch till—well, till it didn't matter whether they slept under the table or were bundled out into the garden!"

But even if they were, shall we say "merry," at Worthy Park, I think the feather beds must have been aggravating things.

The overseer kept in his room, too, the brands with which they marked the slaves—at least such, I suppose, were one silver mark L.P. and one silver stamp L.P. He had a "Sett of Gold Weights and Scales"—I presume for weighing gold, and not made of the precious metal, though where they got the gold to weigh I do not know; and there was a keg of gunpowder and thirty-three gun flints, kept there, I suppose, to be under his eye.

The doctor was not of much consequence, if we may judge of the furnishing of the "Doctor's Chamber." It had only a "common bed" and little else except the linen chest, in which there were fifteen pairs of fine sheets which strikes me as lavish in contrast to the paucity of everything else. There were eleven fine pillow-cases, one pair of Osnaburg sheets, two pillow-cases of the same stuff, two fine tablecloths, to be used on gala days I expect, and seven Osnaburg tablecloths. But there were only three Osnaburg towels, so that I am not surprised at the next entry, "1 Jack towel & the other cut for

hand towels." Seven glass cloths might be managed with, I suppose, but why enter "1 do. useless and 2 useless sideboard cloths"?

It is evident that in July 1791 something happened to the ruling power on Worthy Park, for another inventory is taken of the household goods and slaves, and one, Arthur McKenzie, who is not otherwise mentioned, remarks in a thin straggling hand: "*N.B.*—By the sundries found in and about the works, the written account is very eroneous," (so he is pleased to spell the word), "in particular speaking Table linen, Glass, Mugs, Cups, Musquito Netts, &c., &c.—ARTHUR MCKENZIE."

Then underneath, "Was obliged to purchase Sheeting" (oh, how careless they must have been with those sheets), "Tablecloaths & Butter, Candles, and send ¾ of the Soap sent to the Great House for the Works; buy also knives, forks, spoons & send 6 silver spoons from the 18 at the Great House.—1st August '91."

I don't wonder at his having to purchase knives, for the "Boy's Pantry" was certainly scantily furnished except in the matter of "Wash hand basons" of which there were ten, but four were sent to the Great House. There were "9 Earthen Dishes and 6 shallow plates, 1 Tureen, 8 Pewter dishes and only 3 new knives and 3 new forks, 3 old knives and four useless," so it rather looks as if once the overseer and a couple of book-keepers had been provided with a knife and fork apiece, the rest of the company, and there must have been some occasionally, had to eat their food with their fingers.

In the "Dry Store" they had all sorts of things. Notice Posts, though considering not half a dozen people on the estate could read, I wonder what they wanted notice posts for. They had "Shovels and

Broad Axes, Bullet Moulds, Old Bayonets, Negro Hatts and Iron Crows." The Herring Store did not contain herrings, at least when the inventory was taken, but had four large empty oil jars, half a barrel of turpentine, alum, roach alum, whatever that may be, and lamp-black. These do not seem to be exactly in their right place in the herring store, but Thomas Kitson examined the inventory and found it correct.

They did use a great many barrels of herrings, for the *Betsey*, Captain Laurie from London, and the *Diana*, Captain Thomas Seaward from Cork, brought out their stores, Osnaburg and baize and "Negro hatts" and check from London, and salt beef and pork and herrings, to say nothing of tallow and candles and soap from Cork. That they should need to bring fish to an island where the sea teems with it, and beef and pork to a place where the cattle and swine would run wild and multiply in the woods if they were left to themselves, is a curious commentary on the wasteful fashion in which the country was managed.

Again and again it is entered that the herrings served out were bad or "mash'd," but I am afraid the slaves got them all the same. Possibly they did not consider that bad herrings constituted cruelty to a slave. The pork and beef were for the white men, and a great deal of the unappetising stuff they seem to have eaten. In one year the *Diana* brought out 15 barrels of beef and 70 barrels of herrings, 4 firkins of butter and 6 kegs of tallow; yet they bought $2\frac{1}{2}$ barrels of beef from Kingston, 2 kegs of tallow and 5 firkins of butter. That they should have bought in the same year a cask and two-thirds of a tierce of codfish, and 4 barrels of American herrings is not so surprising considering the disparity between the negroes and the white men who at most

numbered seven. In three months they served out to the slaves 20 barrels of herrings.

There is an echo of the famine that struck the island in 1786 when 15,000 slaves died of starvation, for in 1790 they bought for the use of the slaves 11,800 lbs. of cocos, that is a root not unlike a yam, 1400 lbs. of yams, and 500 plantains, which last, I suppose, were stems of plantains, as 500 plantains would not have gone far. Worthy Park had a "mountain" like many other estates, for often the cattle are entered as having died of "Poverty and Meagreness on the mountain," or as falling into the sink hole on the "mountain," and presumably the slaves had grounds there where they grew provisions, but as in famines of a later date, the yams failed, and there were no heads to plant for the new crop which may possibly account for the large number of cocos bought.

Once a year the negroes were served out "cloathing." An ordinary man or woman got 6 yards of Osnaburg, 3 yards of baize, and 1 "hatt," but the principal men and women got a little more. Lucretia serving at the Great House once got 12 yards of Osnaburg, and most of the tradesmen, the carpenters and the sawyers and blacksmiths, got 10 yards and sometimes 6 yards of check as well.

"The negro women," says Lesley, writing as late as the middle of the eighteenth century, "go many of them quite naked. They do not know what shame is, and are surprised at an European's bashfulness, who perhaps turns his head aside at the sight. . . . Their Masters give them a kind of petticoat, but they do not care to wear it. In the towns they are obliged to do it, and some of them there go neat enough; but these are the favourites of young Squires who keep them for a certain use."

They must have been a forlorn and ragged crew

of savages the book-keepers saw out into the fields every morning at daybreak. They evidently made them work in the hot and glaring sunshine, holeing for canes, cutting canes, and carting manure on their heads, this last a job much hated, and the whites never remembered, if they ever knew, that no black man or woman works of his own free will in the glare of the tropical sun. On the Gold Coast I have heard the people going out into the fields long before daylight, but I have never seen men or women working hard during the midday hours. This is only common sense, and possibly much of the sickness that decimated the slaves was due to this cause. There is a record of one humanitarian who discovered that it would be well to provide nurses for the infants. Every woman had to go back to field work a fortnight after her baby was born. She must needs take the child, and so great was the heat that sometimes the mother when she had time to attend to it found that the little one on her back was dead!

And yet these slave-owners desired children very much and they deplored the deaths as so much money gone from their pockets, just as man now-a-days regrets when his calf or his foal dies. They grumble very much because the slaves do not increase as they think they ought. They gave no thought to morals, and anybody might father a woman's child. But considering all things I think they grumbled unreasonably. No wild animals increase rapidly in captivity, but in five years there were forty children born on Worthy Park, that is nearly 23 per thousand—not so very bad considering that the rate for London in the year 1919 among a free people was 24·8. But this was discounted by the number of deaths in infancy. Matthew Lewis tells of the ravages of tetanus among the newly born on his estate in the

beginning of the last century, and neither he nor any one else had an idea of the cause or how it might be prevented.

The midwife, the "Garundee," told him that till after the ninth day they had no hope of the new-born babies. It was, had she but known it, a sad commentary on her own want of cleanliness.

The children of the white men had perhaps a better chance of being reared than those of the slaves, because the women who lived with them had an easier time. Their children were slaves like the others, but it was the custom not to put them to field work; the boys they made artisans and the girls were trained as house-servants, and Lewis says the other slaves paid them a certain deference, always honouring the girls with the title of "Miss."

"My mulatto housemaid," says he, "is always called 'Miss Polly' by her fellow-servant Phillis."

The last entry in the Worthy Park slave book with George Doubt as Superintendent—I feel as if I knew George Doubt—was on the 28th June 1791. Then apparently something happened, and Arthur M'Kenzie made his moan about the careless way in which the inventory was taken. When the returns for the last quarter 1791 are sent in to the Vestry there is quite a new departure. The "White People" are headed by Rose Price, Esq., and the Rev. John Venicomb bracketed together as having arrived on the 1st December, and we immediately imagine the son of the proprietor accompanied by his bear leader. But there is a still greater departure from the usual run of things on the 23rd of the same month when Edward Phelps and Sussannah Phelps are set down. So that the very last entry of white people in the book mentions a woman!

Was it all worth while? Even after I have read

the whole very carefully. I am not in a position to judge. Only it seems to me the expenses were very great. Not only was there the upkeep of these people, but they were always buying new negroes and in addition to that quite a considerable sum was paid out to negroes hired—slave gangs—to do the jobs for which those on the estate had neither strength nor time.

Occasionally we get the returns. In January 1790 James Fraser, one of the six overseers, certifies that the crop returns are 248 hogsheads, that is 124 tons of sugar, and 85 puncheons of rum. Set that against the 510 tons of sugar and 301 puncheons of rum which Mr Fred Clarke gives me as the returns from the same estate in the year of our Lord 1920. Of course to compare exactly, I should have the wages returns of the present day, the cost of improved machinery and various other things, but looking at it from the point of view of an outsider it certainly looks as if it were not worth it.

Very, very slowly we move towards perfection, but we do move. Perhaps one hundred and thirty years hence, some writer will read of 1921 with as much wonder as I read in this old slave book of a day that is done.

CHAPTER VII

SLAVE REBELLIONS

Considering that every Great House was surrounded by hundreds of these alien dark people, most of them dumbly resentful of their condition, it is to me a little surprising that the white man ever brought out his wife and children to share his home. And yet he did sometimes. Of course, nothing is more certain than that we grow accustomed to a danger that is always threatening. There are people who take matches into powder factories and those who dwell on the slopes of Vesuvius and Etna. From the earliest days the Jamaicans had been used to forced labour, they were very sure they could not work the plantations without it, and that the slaves had to be broken in and guarded, came all in the day's work.

The first difficulty after the buying of the slaves was what they called the "seasoning." The earlier settlers first used the word, but it came to be applied specially to the settling down of the slaves, though it seems to me simply to mean the survival of the fittest. A certain number of newly arrived slaves were sure to die. It was not the climate that killed them, but the breaking in of a free savage unaccustomed to work, at least not to work with the regularity, and at the times the white man expected of him. He was an exile, he was lonely, he was driven to

Photo from] [*Frank Cundall.*

A Great House.

[*Face page* 150.

this hated work with the whip, he could not understand what was said to him, he could not make his wants known, and soon realised it would avail him little if he did, and he pined and died.

In Lesley's time, and I am afraid long after, the slaves were grossly underfed.

"'Tis sad," he writes, "to see the mean shifts to which these poor creatures are reduced. You'll see them daily about twelve o'clock when they turn in from work scraping the dunghills at every gentleman's door" (I do like that touch) "for bones which they break extremely small, boil and eat the broth." He adds that he hardly cares to speak of their sufferings because of the regard he had for their masters. And then he goes on to do so. He says that the most trivial error was punished with a terrible whipping, "I have seen some of them treated in that cruel manner for no other reason but to satisfy the brutish pleasure of an overseer. . . . I have seen their bodies in a Gore of Blood, the Skin torn off their backs with the cruel Whip, beaten, Pepper and Salt rubbed on the Wounds and a large stick of Sealing Wax dropped leisurely upon them. It is no wonder if the horrid pain of such inhuman tortures incline them to rebel; at the same time it must be confessed they are very perverse, which is owing to the many disadvantages they lie under, and the bad example they daily see."

A man had a right to kill his slave or mutilate him if he ran away, but a man who killed a slave out of "Wilfulness, Wantonness, or Bloody mindedness," was to suffer three months' imprisonment and pay £50 to the owner of the slave. It was merely a question of value, the slave was not considered. If a servant killed a slave he was to get thirty-nine lashes on the bare back, and serve

the owner of the slave after his time with his master had expired four years. That is to say, he had to pay for the loss of the slave's services. Indeed the negro's life in those days was by no means safeguarded, for if a man killed by night a slave found out "of his owner's grounds, road, or common path, such person was not to be subject to any damage or action for the same." That is to say, the wandering slave was a danger to the community, and might be killed on suspicion as might some beast of prey. There was a law, too, that all slaves' houses should be searched once a fortnight for "Clubs, Wooden Swords, and mischievious Weapons." Any found were to be burnt. Stolen goods were also to be sought, and "Flesh not honestly come by"; for slaves were forbidden to have meat in their possession. The punishment was death, and in the slave book of Rose Hall after this law had fallen into desuetude there is an entry under Monday, 28th September 1824: "Killed a steer named 'Porter' in consequence of his leg being broken, sunk him in the sea to prevent the negroes from eating it, and having the like accidents occur." It does seem hard so to waste the good meat that the negroes craved, poor things, as children nowadays crave sugar. For a negro does not regard meat as food even now. It is a treat, a luxury.

In Kingston and other towns the notice ran, "No person whatever shall fire any small arms after eight at night unless upon alarm of insurrection which is to be by the Discharge of Four Muskets or small arms distinctly." The whole atmosphere was one of fear. No negro or mulatto was permitted to row in any wherry or canoe without at least one white man, and all boats of every description had to be chained up and their oars and sails safely

disposed, and so important was this rule considered that any master of a craft who broke it was fined £10. There was a punishment of four years' imprisonment for stealing or taking away any craft, and it is clear this had reference not to its value but to the assistance such craft might be to the common enemy.

A negro slave striking any person except in defence of his master's property — observe he had none of his own—was for the first offence to be severely whipt, for the second to be severely whipt, have his or her nose slit and face burnt in some place, and for the third it was left to two Justices or three freeholders to inflict "Death or whatever punishment they shall think fit."

When slaves were first introduced the master seems to have had absolute power of life and death, and indeed long after, when it was beginning to dawn on the ruling race that the black man had some rights, it was still difficult to punish a cruel master, because no black man's evidence could be received against a white man. This rule, too, sometimes worked both ways.

There was once an overseer who was cruelly unjust to the book-keeper under him. As we have seen, the underlings subsisted very largely on salt food. This overseer, disliking his book-keeper, decreed that his salt fish should be exposed to the hot sun until it was rotten and then cooked and offered to him in the usual way. The young man protested, and the overseer declared he had fish out of the same barrel and found nothing wrong with it. Finally the exasperated book-keeper came up to the house and in desperation shot his tormentor. But he was never brought to justice, because there were only slaves present and no white man could be convicted on the testimony of a slave.

When we read the slave code we do well to remember not how men are punished nowadays, but how they were all punished, black and white, in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and the first part of the nineteenth centuries. Laws were made for the rich, and the poor man without influence must go under.

And having said all this, it perhaps seems curious to add that we ought always to remember that the average planter treated his slaves as well as he knew how. Even now we are always advancing. The housemistress of 1921 has to give her maids of right what the housemistress of 1900 would have thought ridiculous, even as a privilege. It was to the planter's interest that his slaves should be in good health and contented, but what none of them understood was that no man should be subject to the whim of another. The wrong was in enslaving a man. How should they understand it? Slavery had been a custom from time immemorial. Even in this twentieth century I have heard one of the best and kindest women I know mourning, "But if the poor are all so well off what shall we do for servants?" She found it difficult to believe that Providence would not arrange for someone to serve her. So the planters, I am sure, believed that Providence had placed the black man in Africa specially for their use. Why he was not contented with his lot, and a "good" slave, they could never understand. And yet the black people didn't even mind dying, to such sore straits were the poor things reduced.

"They look upon death," declares Lesley, "as a blessing. . . . 'Tis indeed surprising to see with what courage and intrepidity some of them will meet their fate and be merry in their last moments."

He had seen more deaths than we of the twentieth century can contemplate with equanimity, and many runaways trying to better their lot. It was probably easier for the first slaves to run away than at the time we come across them in the slave books of Worthy Park and Rose Hall. The lonelier parts of the island were abandoned because of these runaway negroes, who banded themselves together and were a constant danger to the isolated settler. And a place in fertile Jamaica abandoned soon becomes densest jungle, affording a still more useful shelter to people accustomed to such surroundings. Even though the life of a savage in the woods was a hard one, it was better than the almost certain fate that awaited them if they came in and gave themselves up. I conclude it was only when a slave found himself alone that he returned of his own free will. If he found companions he stayed.

This of course it was that made of the Maroons such an ever present danger, free as they were among a black population that outnumbered the white ten to one. The settler had always an enemy within the gates.

"This bad success," mourns the historian when the whites have failed to overcome the Maroons, "encouraged Gentlemen's slaves to rebel."

The trouble was that to keep the slaves under, a great quantity of arms and ammunition had to be stored on the plantations, and when they rose this was likely to be turned against their owners. Did one of those overseers at Worthy Park ever toss restlessly on his feather bed and wonder what would be his fate if some of those slaves, the "ill-disposed" or "skulkers," rushed his hot room and possessed themselves of that store of powder?

It is only natural that history should mention

the rebellions that made their mark, and never those that were nipped in the bud. But those that had a measure of success were numerous enough. There were no less than four between 1678 and 1691, in the three last of which many white people were murdered. One of these was at Sutton's, a plantation near the centre of the island.

I have been to Sutton's. A long low house it is, not the first house, the slaves burned that, behind it are the green hills and in front red lilies grow beneath the bananas after the rain. The women who were born there say it is the loveliest plantation in an island of lovely plantations. And here at the end of the seventeenth century, 400 slaves, stark naked savages with hoes and machetes in their hands, stormed the house, and by sheer weight of numbers bore all before them. They murdered their master and every white man there, and seized all the arms kept to be used against them. Fifty muskets and blunderbusses and other arms they took, great quantities of shot and four small field pieces—(in such fear they had been held)—and then they marched on, raiding other plantations and killing every white person they could lay their hands upon.

Why they did not keep their freedom I do not know, but once the whites were roused they had no chance. They fled back to Sutton's, and driven out of that they fired the cane pieces. Then a party of whites came up behind and completely routed them. Many were killed, some escaped to the hills, but 200 laid down their arms and surrendered. Very unwisely. For though some were pardoned our chronicler declares that most of those who submitted "met with that fate which they well deserved."

In the eighteenth century there were at least nineteen terrible disturbances, sometimes called

rebellions, sometimes conspiracies, to murder the whites, and in the thirty-two years of the nineteenth century that elapsed before the apprenticeship system that heralded the freeing of the slave was introduced, there were no less than six rebellions, conspiracies and mutinies, to say nothing of the isolated murders that must have been done and were not worth recording as history.

Not only were these rebellions sanguinary but they were expensive. The cost of putting down the last in 1832 was £161,596, without taking into account the damage sustained by property and the loss to the community of the lives sacrificed. If the black man suffered, white Jamaica too paid very heavily indeed for her slaves.

The Great Rebellion that was long remembered in Jamaica was the rebellion of 1760, and it broke out in St Mary's Parish on the Frontier Plantation belonging to a man named Ballard Beckford. The adjoining estate was Trinity, belonging to Zachary Bayley, the maternal uncle of Bryan Edwards the historian, but in his book we only get a tantalising account that sets us longing for more details.

Of the leaders, "their barbarous names," says Bridges, forgetting that the white man had probably supplied those names, "were Tacky and Jamaica," and Tacky was a man who had been a chief in "Guiney." That, though Edwards did not know it, meant that he had been accustomed to a certain amount of savage grandeur; had been dressed in silk of bright colours, and wore a necklace of gold and anklets and armlets of the same metal. On his fingers and bare black toes had been rings of rough nuggets. He had been wont to ride in a hammock, as King George rides in his State coach, and with an umbrella carried by slaves high over his head; to

the great discomfort of the slaves, but it had marked his high estate. He would move to the accompaniment of barbaric music and on great feast days, such as that of his accession, his "stool," the symbol of his power, really a carved wooden seat, was literally drenched in the blood of many unfortunate men and women. I remember passing through an Ashanti town on the day of the Coronation of our present King. There was a great feast and all the minor chiefs for miles round had come in to celebrate and all the stools were soaked in blood—sheep's blood.

"Not long ago," said the great chief, "it would have been men's."

"Oh!" said the young doctor who was with me, "sheep's is better."

"Perhaps," said the African potentate doubtfully, and it was clear he was thinking regretfully of the days when there really would have been something like a decent sacrifice.

In Tacky's days, too, when the chief died, a great pit would be dug, his bier lowered into it and round it would be seated a large number of his harem who would accompany their lord and master as attendants to the shades, and lucky indeed might they count themselves if they had their throats cut first and were not buried alive.

Even so late as 1908 in Tarkwa I remember a chief—not a great one—dying, and at the same time there came to the District Commissioner a woman complaining that her adopted daughter, an euphemism for a household slave, had disappeared. And the District Commissioner said he was certain, though he could not prove it, that the girl had been stolen and sacrificed that the soul of the chief might not go unaccompanied on his last journey, as that

troublesome British Government had set its face against the sacrifice of wives.

Clearly Tacky could not have objected to slavery as an institution, he only objected to it as applied to himself. And he was accustomed to bloodshed.

On those two plantations where the rebellion started were over 100 Gold Coast negroes, and the historian declares they had never received the least shadow of ill-treatment from the time of their arrival there. Like Tacky, he was not so far advanced as to realise that the holding of a man in slavery was in itself gross ill-treatment. We can hardly blame him if he did not think ahead of his times, though we more enlightened may hold a brief for Tacky and those Guinea men, brutal as they undoubtedly were.

Mr Bayley, it appears, inspected his newly purchased Africans, was pleased with the stalwart crew and gave out to them with his own hands not only clothing but knives. Then he rode off to Ballard's Valley, an estate a few miles distant.

The Guinea men lost no time in making a bid for freedom. At daybreak, in the morning, Mr Bayley was wakened by a servant with the information that his Trinity negroes had revolted; and the people who brought the information shouted that the insurgents were close upon their heels. Mr Bayley seems to have been a man of action and equal to the occasion. A council was held at Ballard's Valley, the house that could be most easily defended in the neighbourhood was selected, and Mr Bayley mounted his horse and accompanied by a servant rode out to warn every place he could reach. But first, being very sure the revolted slaves—his slaves at any rate—had nothing to complain of, he rode out to meet them. I can imagine that gentleman of the eighteenth century in shirt and

drawers, in the dewy tropical morning, his broad straw hat over a handkerchief on his head, a knife at his belt and pistols at his holsters, mounting his horse in hot haste at the verandah steps and riding straight down the hill with his bond-servant behind him shouting to those who watched his departure, perhaps protesting at his rashness, that he would bring the ungodly villains to their bearings.

But he had barely started before he heard the wild ear-piercing Koromantyn yell of war, and saw below him on the hillside a body of stark-naked negroes marching in rude order for the overseer's house not half a mile away. He looked back. The other gentlemen were mounting in hot haste, making for the rendezvous, rousing the country as they went and then—a brave man was Zachary Bayley—he rode towards the body of negroes. They did not notice him at first, and with the confidence of the white man he went towards them waving his hat and shouting. Truly a brave man, for 100 Ashantis armed with muskets and knives, yelling, shouting, foaming at the mouth, with fierce eyes and white teeth gleaming, men young and strong, chosen for their strength, are not to be lightly faced. Had they all come on he could not possibly have escaped, but the negroes were always keen on plunder, and apparently only a few turned aside from their main objective, the overseer's house, and met him with a discharge of muskets. His servant's horse was shot under him—shocking bad shots they must have been to do so little damage—and the chronicler declares they both narrowly escaped with their lives. I'd have liked him better had he told me how. I expect the overseer's house was more interesting than a man who, if put to it, would certainly show fight. At least he found discretion

the better part of valour, and the rest of the Koromantyns went on to the overseer's house. At Trinity the overseer was a man named Abraham Fletcher, who had earned the respect and love of the negroes, and he had been allowed to pass through the ranks of the revolting slaves and escape scot-free. I don't know whether he was the man who brought the news to Ballard's Valley. But they showed no such mercy here. All the white men in that overseer's house they butchered before they were fairly awake, and then passed on towards Port Maria. There were some among them evidently who knew the ropes. The fort at Port Maria must have been guarded with singular carelessness, for they slew the sentry, and seem easily to have possessed themselves of all the arms and ammunition they could manage, and then they went through the country slaying and burning.

Luckily they stayed to burn. It gave Zachary Bayley time to ride round to all the plantations in the neighbourhood.

We can imagine the excited, determined man on the galloping horse dashing up the hills to the Great Houses, his breathless arrival and the warning given, the name of the place of rendezvous.

"But we can't"—the protest might begin. But the other knew they *must* get there.

"I tell you the slaves have risen. The overseer and book-keepers at Cruikshank's have been murdered! Get your horses. There's not a minute to be lost!"

"But my blackguards——"

"Damnation! The Koromantyns I tell you, man! Hurry along that girl of yours and her child! I saw the place burning! I heard the poor beggars' frantic shrieks and I couldn't help them, Cruikshank has cleared out. For the love of God, stir yourself!"

"But the girl is——"

"I tell you they killed Nancy and a child at her breast, and she a mulatto, and dark at that! Not a drop of white blood! Hurry! Waste not a second! Is that the nearest road to Brimmer Hall?" He stretches out his whip. "Tell the others you saw me, and I'll be back as soon as I can. But—my God, man, if you want to save your bacon, hurry!" and his horse turned with a clatter and he was away again, leaving dismay and consternation behind him.

And well they might fear. From the butchery at Ballard's Valley, where they had drunk rum mixed with the blood of their victims in true barbaric triumph, the revolting slaves marched to Port Maria, and thence along the high road into the interior, the other slaves joining them as they went, and they spread death and destruction, murdering the people and firing the canes. The galloping horse on an errand of mercy did not reach Esher and other estates, they were roused too late by the Koromantyn yell, and the Ashantis behaved like the bloodthirsty savages they were. In that one morning they butchered between thirty and forty whites and mulattoes, sparing not even the babies in their mother's arms.

Gladly would I know something more about it, but the historian was not an artist, and doubtless in those days everybody knew exactly what happened. In the heat of the day the whites would be lolling idly in the great hall, second breakfast just finished, and there would come the pad, pad of bare feet on the polished mahogany floor.

"Missus! Missus! Run! Dem Koromantyns! Dem bad slaves!"

Some one would look from the window. The

noise that had been as the other noises of a morning's work swelled in the sea breeze, and there was a commotion, naked figures rushing here and there and—What was that? That white man running with his face all bloody. Could it be the new bookkeeper?

Even at this day there are people who will tell you what tradition has told them that the negroes would come on in a body, fling themselves like an avalanche on the Great House and cut down ruthlessly all before them. Or if they found the white people fled, they satisfied their desires by broaching the rum casks and breaking open the stores. This possibly saved many lives, for while the enemy were thus engaged the fugitives made the best of their way to some place of safety. They did not always succeed in reaching it, for the slaves knew the woods far better than their masters, a thousand times better than their mistresses, and they hunted them, beat the bush for them, as beaters beat for pheasants, cut down the men with the machetes they themselves had supplied or beat them with conch shells—and the women, nothing could be more terrible than the fate of the poor girl cowering on the hillside among the dense jungle, its very denseness betraying her presence to eyes keen as those of these savages trained to hunt.

Edwards gives no details of what happened to the women slain in this rebellion, but a little later on he speaks of the rebellion in Hayti and he tells how a superintendent who had been popular and good to his slaves was treated by them when they rose, and he adds the ghastly details of what happened to his wife, who was expecting almost immediately the birth of her baby. They are too terrible to give here, though I do not count myself

over-squeamish, but it made me understand why Zachary Bayley fled at full speed along those rough hillside tracks to warn the planters.

There is another horrible story told of a Jamaican planter whose slaves rose against him, slaves whom he trusted and to whom he had been kind. They rose in the night led by a runaway he had rescued from starving in the woods. They gagged him and then proceeded to torture him, "by turns wounded his most tender and sensitive parts till his soul took flight." They violated his wife and killed her with the rest of the family and every white man on the plantation.

This is what the white people feared subconsciously all the time. What the girls feared when they let down their hair and undressed for the night, when they drew together the shutters and shut out the gorgeous tropical moonlight, what the master of the house feared when he stirred in his sleep, uneasily, roused because the dogs were barking, what the mother feared as she hushed her baby's crying to listen, and wonder if that were the tramp of unshod feet over in the direction of the breeze mill. It is what Zachary Bayley feared when he tore across the country in the dawn of the tropical morning.

By noon he had collected 130 men, "white men and trusty blacks." We do not know the proportion of white men to "trusty blacks," but we do know that the white men were all imbued with the same awful fear, the fear lest all the Koromantyns in the island, and there were thousands of them, should revolt. These men Bayley led in pursuit of the rebels.

The wasteful savages had dissipated the advantage they had gained. They might have held

the whole colony up to ransom, but instead they were actually found at Haywood Hall roasting an ox by the flames of the buildings they had set on fire.

I should like to know more precise details, but Edwards only says the whites attacked them with great fury, killed eight or nine on the spot, took several prisoners and drove the rest into the woods. Here, of course, sustenance could not be found for so large a party all at once, and they were obliged to act wholly on the defensive. The ruling class when they were thoroughly aroused had this in their favour, they had some sort of discipline, the blacks had none. Sullenly enough they had retired to the woods, and there Tacky the chief who had instituted the revolt was killed by one of the parties which constantly harried the wretched fugitives, and before long some died, some made good in the recesses of the mountains and the rest were taken.

But before they were conquered the revolt had spread across the island to Westmoreland.

"In St Mary," writes Bridges, "they were repulsed, broken and disheartened. In Westmoreland they were flushed with early victory; murderous success crowned their first efforts; they beat off the militia, increased their ranks to a thousand effective men, and after a tedious struggle they could be subdued only by the exertions of a regiment of regulars, the militia of the neighbouring parish and the Maroons of the interior. The most cruel excesses that ever stained the pages of history, marked the progress of these rebels; and the details which would elucidate barbarity scarcely human, almost chills the warm hope of civilisation ever reaching the bosoms in which ferocity is so innate."

Edwards takes some trouble to show us what the civilisation of the times meant and what might

be hoped from it. It was better to die than be taken, for there was little to choose between black and white in fiendish cruelty. The white gentleman ran the ignorant savage close.

"It was thought necessary," says Edwards, "to make a few examples of some of the most guilty. Of three who were clearly proved to have been concerned in the murders at Ballard's Valley, one was condemned to be burnt and the other two to be hung up alive in irons and left to perish in that dreadful situation."

There is in the Jamaican Institute a set of the irons used for such a sentence. When found, they had the bones of a skeleton in them, the skeleton of a woman!

They burnt the man after the fashion that Hans Sloane described. He uttered not a groan when they applied the fire to his feet, and saw his legs and feet reduced to ashes with the "utmost firmness and composure. Then getting one of his hands loose he seized a burning brand and flung it in the face of his executioner." Truly a man it seems to me who might have been worth something better.

In the case of the other two, Fortune and Kingston, the whole proceeding was gone through with a ghastly deliberation that makes us shiver now although it happened a hundred and sixty years ago. They were given a hearty meal and then they were hung up on a gibbet which was erected on the parade of the town of Kingston. Edwards declares that from the time they were hung up till the moment they died they never uttered a complaint. A week later they were still alive and as the authorities thought that one of them had something to tell his late master, Zachary Bayley, who was on his plantation, Edwards was sent for, but though he had an

interpreter he could not understand what the man wanted and he only remembers that one of them laughed immoderately at something, he did not know what. They must have had water, for one lived for eight days and the other one died on the morning of the ninth day.

"Throughout their torture," remarks Bridges, "they evinced such hardened insolence and brutal insensibility that even pity was silenced." What did he expect them to do? They could not expect any mercy, so why should they express regret except for having failed?

But did Bridges really believe, "that their condition was gradually rising in the scale of humanity and the tide of Christianity, which in the wilds of Africa never could have reached them, was here flowing with a gentle but accelerated motion." God save us from the Christianity preached by some of its advocates.

Here I may put it on record that the slaves, no matter to what torture they were subjected, never betrayed each other. In all the tale of conspiracies and rebellion seldom are we told of a slave having betrayed the secret of the proposed rising, and when one did there was generally strong reason for it. Once a girl begged that the life of her nursling might be saved. The man of whom she begged the baby's life refused—all the whites must die. So she saved the baby she loved and its mother and father by betraying the rebellion. Then again, sometimes I think a girl might tell to save the life of her white lover, the book-keeper or the overseer of the estate.

One would think that living amidst a hostile people every white man would be most careful in his comings and goings, careful even of what he said, for though at first the negroes did not under-

stand English, the house servants soon learned it, and we may be very sure that the doings and sayings of the people up at the Great House were reported daily in the slave village and listened to with as great avidity as to-day we read the news of the world in the daily papers.

Besides, all the slaves were not hostile. The Creoles, born to the conditions in which they found themselves, were more contented. They regarded slavery as their natural lot, and it was only by slow degrees that the talk of emancipation grew. But it did grow and the rebellion of 1832, a very devastating one, which ran like wildfire through Westmoreland, Hanover, and St James', was caused mainly because at the Great Houses and the "Buckras'" tables the white people talking carelessly before the black servants, to whom they never gave a thought, declared emphatically that all this talk of emancipation was so much rubbish.

And at Christmas time, the angry, disappointed, misguided slaves rose. I have always taken particular interest in this rebellion, because I once enjoyed the hospitality of Montpelier, one of the loveliest pens in Jamaica, where much money has been spent, and beneath the trees on the green grass rest white Indian cattle bred for draught purposes. Mr Edwards, the owner, told me that he used to hear stories in his youth of how the slaves burned the houses, and mills, and cane pieces, and the night was alight with blazing fires. Major Hall and his wife, high in the hills at Kempshot, received warning just in time, and through the darkness made their way to Worcester, lying far below.

It must have been terrible, stumbling down that stony mountain path through the darkness, with the dread fear that the enemy might reach Worcester

before them. Neither husband nor wife returned, nor was the house rebuilt, and not till nearly fifty years afterwards did Mr Maxwell Hall, seeking through the country for a site on which to build an observatory, choose a hill on Kempshot Pen just above the place where the old house had stood. Where the country was not dense jungle it was occupied by negro cultivators, the most destructive cultivators perhaps in the world, of the old house there was not one stone left upon another, nothing remained but the Mango Walk. It stands there still, the only monument to the white people who once lived on that spot. The trees have long given over bearing, but the avenue is a thing of beauty, and to the very tops has grown a lovely creeper which strews the ground beneath with heavily scented white bell-shaped flowers.

It has nothing to do with them, of course, but in my mind that beautiful Walk stands for the slave rebellions, the terrible times that are past and gone but hardly forgotten. In judging the relations of the white man and the black, in weighing the causes of discord between them, in considering the short-comings of both, we must always remember that past when they lived together bound by a tie galling to both which has left behind it a legacy of bitterness that only time and success on the part of the black man can sweeten.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAROONS

Considering the size of Jamaica, it seems strange to say that in the fastnesses of its mountains there lived a body of men, just a handful of them, who actually defied the British Government and all the arms they could bring against them, not for a year or twenty years, but for close on one hundred and forty years!

It seems incredible; but when I went to live at the Hyde I began to believe it, once I had gone up to Maroon town I quite understood it, and before I had left Jamaica, having spent three months at Kempshot, I saw what an ideal country was this for guerilla warfare such as the Maroons waged. The story of these black men is one that deserves to be remembered and set down beside the tale of the Doones in Devonshire, or the Highland Chiefs who held the glens of Scotland for the Stuart king.

The origin of the term "Maroon" is somewhat obscure. There are people who say it is derived from a Spanish word meaning wild, and there are others who declare that Maroons simply meant hog-hunters, for upon these animals the free-booters lived.

Bryan Edwards says the Spaniards left 1500 slaves behind them. Bridges is sure that every Spanish slave was killed or taken within eight years of the conquest of the island. But this parson

of the Church of England is a gentleman whom the more we read him the less we like him. He was a time-server and a sycophant on his own showing. His evident intention was to please the planters, and though that in itself is not a crime, it is certainly a sin, when a man undertakes to write a history, to look only for the good on one side, and to be very sure of the evil on the other. In the days of Bridges (he wrote in 1828), the island was divided into planters and slaves, and the man who drank the planters' punch, who was entertained in their houses, who laid himself out to be so invited—"sucked up" as Australian school-boys used to say—was hardly likely to consider the slaves anything but the dregs of humanity. It flattered the vanity of the planters to think that within eight years of the driving out of the Spaniards their slaves were subdued as well. It is hardly likely they were. It seems to me that that little band of men, hidden away among the cockpit country of St James and Trelawny, and in the mountains of Portland and St Thomas, probably began with the slaves left behind by the Spaniards, and were recruited by all the more adventurous spirits who managed to escape from their loathed bondage. For I do not believe that the black people, as some people say, were happier as slaves. Rather do I agree with Burke who, in the great debates on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, said: "That nothing made a happy slave but a degraded man."

The cockpit country of Jamaica is an amazing country still. I paid it a visit by the courtesy of Mr Moralez, the father of the lovely girl who owned the little canoe, and she came with me to show me points of interest, for she had lived in Montego Bay all her life.

It was a glorious morning in December, and December mornings in Jamaica are more likely to be delicious than a May morning in England or Australia. There is something in the soft, cool air that no mere pen can describe. Everywhere is green, dark green of pimento, light green of akee or dogwood, vivid green of cane. Crushing in the sugar mills has begun, and all is activity as you pass the works on the estates. On the roads, marching along with loads on their heads, mostly of green banana for it happened to be a Monday, were throngs of people, mostly women. They tramp miles—old women, young women, boys, and little girls who step out on sturdy little black legs and swing their short and scanty frocks, and are smiling under a load that surprises me, for they are proud that they, too, may join the throng of wage-earners, small wage-earners when we compare results with other labourers in the outside world, but still, slaves no longer, and earning money that is their very own.

The road winds with hairpin curves up the steep hills. Sheer up on one side, very often built up with stone on the other—there is rock in plenty—and sheer down into the valley below. Soon we were on mountain land, untouched by the hand of man, and crawling up one side of a mountain we could look over to the breakneck mountain side across the cockpit that lay between, for the cockpits mentioned so often in the history of Jamaica are what we should call gullies in Australia, and glens in Scotland. Precipitous holes are they, and far below us and far above us we could see tree-ferns such as I have not seen since I left Australia, and all the steep mountain sides are bound together with undergrowth and creeper, growing so densely that I can quite well believe a man who said you

could progress only at the rate of a quarter of a mile a day when you had to cut your way through. There are trees, of course, wonderful trees, festooned with vines, but we could only see them from a distance, the trees on the other side of the mountain; close at hand we saw only the tangle of greenery growing round the trunks. And the trees grow tall and straight in their struggle towards the light and sunshine. There is mahogany, the lovely wood we all know—I pride myself on my mahogany wardrobes; there is mahoe, nearly as fine; there is bullet wood, hard as its name implies and too good for the sleepers into which it is made, and wherever there is space enough for it, it looks splendid standing out against the blue on some mountain spur, there is the symmetrical broad leaf which is akin to what they call the almond, though it is certainly not the almond of Italy. And again, close at hand, there is maiden-hair and coral, and other ferns like a conservatory grown wild, growing beside little springs of crystal clear water that spurt out among the rocks; and there are creamy ginger lilies turning their delicate faces to the light, and other lilies, gorgeous as a tulip, red splashed with orange, true daughters of the sun. And always is the feathery bamboo wildly luxuriant, growing as if this were its original habitat, which it is not, and the innumerable creepers which bind all these things growing riotously with the richness of life that prevails in the tropics. Oh, a splendid land! But I do not wonder that here for over a hundred years the Maroons were masters, and raided down into the pens and estates that encroached on their grounds with impunity. They say that the Maroons were not friendly with the slaves. But that was not always true. Maroons and slaves were the

same colour, and that is a great bond—how great a bond we only realise when we have left a land where everyone is white, and at length see in any one of our own colour at least a potential friend. So I think it must have been with the Maroons till the white men made of them slave-catchers, and even then the unalterable tie must have sometimes held good.

I have lived in Trelawny and in Montego Bay, places close to the Maroon Country, though twenty miles in Jamaica up steep acclivities, down abrupt slopes, across mountain passes, is twenty times as far as it would be in another land. But the Hyde was close to the cockpit country. We went just a little way behind into the hills and we soon came to a place where no wheeled vehicle could pass, where we must of necessity walk along the bridle track cut in the side of the steep mountains that rose up on either hand, though perhaps a very sure-footed horse or mule might have carried us in safety. And all the houses round about those hills had loop-holes in their walls.

"For the Maroons."

The people have forgotten long ago the old-time fear; only when you see a curious loophole in the lower masonry of a house, a house on the hillside to which you mount by many winding stone steps—a fine staircase in any land—and you ask what is that for, the dwellers say, "The Maroons." But sometimes it was for general defence, defence against the picaroons that infested the seas, against the slaves who might rise at any time. But round about Montego Bay and in the hills in Trelawny close against the cockpit country those slots in the masonry were certainly against the Maroons.

Dallas says that many of the slaves who rose

at Suttons in Clarendon made their way to the Maroons in the heart of the island, and after that their numbers were occasionally recruited from among the plantation negroes. They got provisions from the provision grounds, and the settlers who lived a little back from the towns in places like Balaclava (which was not Balaclava then), Ulster Springs, on the mountain sides as at the Hyde, Catadupa, and quaintly named Lapland, were kept in a perpetual state of alarm.

There was a time when I thought to be kept in a perpetual state of alarm would make life impossible, and I wondered at pioneers who first crossed Kentucky—"that dark and bloody ground," —at the estate owners and pen-keepers who dwelt among their discontented slaves in places where the Maroons might easily raid; indeed I wonder still. But now, in a measure I understand. During the war I lived not far from Woolwich arsenal, that magnet for German airships. Were people there afraid?

Some of us were, I suppose, but the vast majority grew accustomed to the alarms. So few people were killed even if they came every night, so few houses were wrecked though the night sky was illuminated with search-lights that we became inured to them. And so I suppose it was with these people who lived on the borders of the Maroon Country. The pens and estates close to the mountains were their homes. Here they must live, and they hoped that the raiding Maroons would not come their way, that their slaves would stand by them, and that they would be able to beat them off if they did; that anyhow, if the worst came to the worst, help would come to extricate them before the savages were able to work their wicked will upon them.

Still, of course, the Maroons must have retarded the settlement of the country as Dallas says they undoubtedly did.

"By degrees they became very formidable, and in their predatory excursions greatly distressed the back settlers by plundering their houses, destroying their cattle, and carrying off their slaves by force."

"At first," says Dallas, "they contented themselves with isolated cases of depredation, but growing bolder, became such a danger that the colonists resolved to reduce them."

"Isolated cases of depredation" are very hard on those isolated cases. But when raids like this have been repeated twice or thrice, then even the colonist who did not come into contact with the Maroons realised that something must be done. The Maroons concentrated themselves under Cudjoe, whom we read was "a bold, skilful, and enterprising man, who, on assuming the command, appointed his brothers Accompong and Johnny leaders under him, and Cuffee and Quao subordinate captains. Many of these negroes seem to have been Koromantyns, runaway slaves, whom Dallas describes as "a people inured to war on the coast of Africa." Ashantis all I doubt not.

Cudjoe had a great reputation. From the Maroons in the Eastern Mountains a body calling themselves Cottawoods broke away, and with their women and children joined Cudjoe by the rugged, inaccessible mountain paths and valleys, and Dallas tells of another body of black men who also cast in their lot with him.

"These," says he, "were distinct in every respect, their figure, character, language, and country being different from those of the other blacks. Their skin is of a deeper jet than that of any other negro,

their features resemble those of Europeans, their hair is of a long and soft texture like a Mulatto's or Quadroon's; their form is more delicate, and their stature rather lower than those of the people they joined; they were much handsomer to a European eye, but seemed not to have originally possessed such hardiness and strength of nerve as the other people under Cudjoe; and although it is probable that the intercourse with the latter had existed between seventy and eighty years, and an intermixture of families had taken place, their original character was easily traced in their descendants. They were called Madagascars, but why I do not know, never having heard that any slaves were brought from the island of Madagascar. They said that they ran away from the settlements about Lacovia in the parish of St Elizabeth soon after the planters had bought them. It does not appear that their numbers were great, but they were remarkably prolific."

Bridges says in much more grandiloquent language that a slave ship from Madagascar with slaves that had Malay blood in their veins was wrecked on the coast, and the slaves escaping joined the Maroons. But one thing is clear, that the blood of a good many races ran in the veins of these free-booters who held the heights for so long. It is quite possible there was even a little admixture of white blood, but not very much, for one thing was certain, they hated the whites—naturally.

At first it seems Cudjoe was only regarded as a leader of runaway slaves; later, as his successes grew and settlement among the mountains became more and more difficult on account of his depredations, they decided he was a Maroon. Hidden in the inaccessible fastnesses of the interior, the troops

sent against him were foiled again and again. It was rough on those soldiers dressed in the absurd fashions of the time so unsuitable for the tropics, but once they got beyond the parade ground, I doubt not they accommodated themselves to circumstances lightly clad in shirt and breeches. There is in the Jamaican Institute a fearsome erection of black felt and brass which says it is the headgear of a militia regiment in the eighteenth century, and is kept there as a monument to the unutterable folly of those who arranged for their fighting forces in the tropics. If everything else was ordered on like lines, it is not surprising that a foe who could take advantage of every stick and stone and tree, could and did easily make all the discipline a thing of naught.

At first the Maroons had only desired to plunder, but since indiscriminate plunder could not be allowed in a community that was striving to be civilised, and they found themselves driven farther and farther into the woods and mountains by assailants who were probably not very tender towards those who fell into their hands, they began reprisals.

"Murder," says Dallas, "attended all their successes; not only men but women and children were sacrificed to their fury, and even people of their own colour if unconnected with them. Over such as secretly favoured them, while they apparently remained at peace on the plantations they exercised a dominion . . . and made them subservient to their designs. By these Cudjoe was always apprised in time of the parties that were fitted out."

I can imagine the planters talking at their tables, the house servants waiting with unmoved or even sympathetic faces, and yet carrying the news to the field labourers. That would be enough. At night

one of them would steal off to the mountains that are so near to every estate in Jamaica. They might not even wait for the night. A strange black man would not be noticeable and he might lie hidden in any hut. Knowing the numbers that were coming against them, something of their plans, and best of all knowing the country so thoroughly, it was an easy matter for Cudjoe and his lieutenants, escaped slaves, or descendants of slaves as they were, to circumvent the plans laid against them. Again and again the white assailants were caught in ambush, were slain, and—worse still for those who came after them—Cudjoe supplied his men with arms and ammunition from what they left behind them. It was, as a matter of fact, fairly easy for the Maroons to get arms and ammunition. The times were such that of necessity every man went armed and must be able to get ammunition easily.

"There was no restriction," says Dallas, "in the sale of powder and firearms, and there can be no doubt that Cudjoe had friends who made a regular purchase of them under pretence of being hunters and fowlers for their masters. . . . Nay, a Maroon himself might, carrying a few fowls and a basket of provisions on his head, pass unnoticed and unknown through the immense crowd of negroes frequenting the markets in the large towns."

And these wild men, too, had learned, taught in a hard school, to be careful. They never threw a shot away as the white men did. Every bullet with them was bound to find its billet. The marksmanship of the Maroons became proverbial. Oh, we can see easily enough how it was that Cudjoe managed to protract the war for years.

Things were getting desperate, something must

be done. They had not nearly enough soldiers. . . . But in a country like Jamaica, where slave risings were to be feared, whose coasts were harried by picaroons and corsairs, which might even expect descents by the French and Spaniards, there were the militia, and they raised easily enough independent companies and rangers to cope with the difficulties that faced the country. They even raised a body of negroes called Blackshot, favoured, of course, above the rest of their race, a body of Mulattoes who might perhaps reasonably be supposed to side with the whites, and also they brought over from Central America a body of Mosquito Indians. Both the Blackshot and the Mosquito Indians, wild or half wild men themselves, proved of great assistance. They found out the provisions grounds of Cudjoe and the Maroons, and many were the skirmishes as they drove the freebooters back, back into the recesses of the mountains I went up that sunny December morning; but it is on record that even when the Maroons were defeated it was always the assailants who lost the more heavily. But indeed, seeing the country now that is partly opened up, so that you may stand on a well-made road and look down into the most desperate cockpit, I know that it must have taken an amazing valour to have penetrated at all in the old days.

"There are," says Dallas, "parallel lines of cockpits, but as their sides are often perpendicular from fifty to eighty feet" (looking down with the jungle clear from the top I should have said they were deeper), "a passage from one line to the other is scarcely found practicable to any but a Maroon. . . . There are trees in the glens and the entrance of the defiles is woody. In some water is found." They were almost impregnable those fastnesses. But out

of these defiles the Maroons had to come in search of provisions and the sharp-sighted guides, Mosquito Indians and other black men on the white men's side, easily detected the paths all converging on the same place. It might be a defile so narrow that for half a mile men could only pass through in single file. The Maroons knew as well as their assailants that these paths that led into their impregnable defiles were tell-tale, and they made use of them. Always they were informed of the approach of a body of militia and soldiers. It was a fact hardly to be concealed, and in the dense vegetation surrounding the entrance to the particular cockpit to be attacked they established a line of marksmen, two sometimes if the width of the ground admitted of it. They were well hidden by the roots of trees, by the thick screen of greenery, by the rocks and stones. As soon as the assailants, panting, breathless, fatigued from the terrible climb that lay behind them, approached from their concealment they let fly a volley, and if the forces, who did not lack courage, turned to fire at the spot where they saw the smoke they received a volley in another direction; prepared to charge that, they received a volley from the mouth of the glen, and then the enemy having done all the damage they could retired unhurt and triumphant in proportion as their assailants were bitter and downhearted, for always they left some of their number dead on the field and carried away wounded.

But the harrying nevertheless worried the Maroons. They had to find some place where they could grow their provisions and keep their women and children in safety, for it was not always possible to raid the plantations exactly when they wanted once the white men were on guard. Deeper and

deeper into the mountains they retreated, but Cudjoe was a man of judgment. Taking up his position in the cockpits on the borders of St James and Trelawny, among some of the steepest, mountainous country in Jamaica, he commanded the parishes of St James, Hanover, Westmoreland, and St Elizabeth. He could thus obtain abundant supplies, and with his brother Accompong in the mountains overlooking the Black River, where even though there were more defenders for the plantations there were still more abundant supplies to be had, he made his people very excellent headquarters. At the bottom of the Petty River cockpit they had a supply of water and ground whereon they could grow yams and cassava and corn, so that they always had something to fall back upon and they therefore could choose their own time for coming out. So great a general was this poor runaway negro that in eight or ten years he had united all the stray bands of wandering slaves and terrorised the country-side.

"In their inroads," says Dallas, "they exercised the most horrid barbarities. The weak and defenceless whenever surprised by them fell victims to their thirst for blood; and though some were more humane than others, all paid implicit obedience to the command of a leader when that was given to imbrue their hands in blood; murder once commenced no chief ever had power to stay the hand of his meanest follower, and there is hardly an instance of a prisoner being saved by them." The Maroons have been accused of torturing their prisoners, but Dallas is sure they were so keen on killing that when they did take an unfortunate they were only too eager to cut off his head with their cutlasses or machetes, and doubtless many a wounded man was so despatched. We can hardly blame them for show-

ing no mercy. They were only untaught savages and assuredly no mercy was ever shown them.

By 1739 the position of affairs was intolerable, and Governor Trelawny was determined to rid the colony of the ever-present menace. A considerable number of the soldiers and militia were collected and sent up these heights to surround all the paths to the Maroon settlements. And then, seeing there was little prospect of frightening the Maroons into submission, it was decided to make peace and to range the enemy on the side of the whites. For it must be remembered there were three parties in Jamaica, all antagonistic, whites, slaves, and Maroons. This idea was hailed with enthusiasm, as it seemed that the holding of the Maroons within bounds was likely to be no easier as the years went on, and their conquest was wellnigh impossible. In fact, they were better as friends than as enemies. Whatever they had done was best forgotten, and the Government declared themselves ready to cry quits.

The difficulty was to get within touch, and to make these people who had been hunted and harried all their lives believe this extraordinary thing. They could hardly be expected to realise the position, and it was just as well they should not. For in the face of a slave population that were as tinder beside the flame, failure would be fatal. The prestige of the white man would be gone.

And for this same reason, whatever was done must be done quickly. Colonels Guthrie and Sadler in command were instructed to move with what despatch they might. But, though the Maroons were as weary of the war as their opponents, it was difficult to get speech with Cudjoe and to make him believe that peace was in the air when they

did get speech with him. For he was a cautious man, this negro leader.

When he saw the force brought against him he collected his men in a spot most suitable for his mode of warfare, placing them upon ledges of rock that rose almost perpendicularly to a great height surrounding a plain which narrowed into a passage upon which the whole force could bring their arms to bear. This passage contracted into a defile half a mile long, and it would have been the simplest thing for the Maroons to cut off a party entering it, for it was so narrow that party must march in single file. For long afterwards it was known as Guthrie's defile. In the dell behind, secured by other cockpits behind it again, were collected the Maroon women and children, and on the open ground before the defile the men had erected their huts, which were called Maroon Town, or Cudjoe's Town, and in a moment they could have flown to the rock ledges. And even if the town had been burnt it would not have been a very grave loss, just a town of wattle and posts, such as they build even now on the Gambia, with a grass or palm leaf thatch. And all around were stationed men in the hills with horns made generally of conch shells, and in those days a negro could say a good deal with a horn, even as in Africa now he can send a message hundreds of miles by tapping a tom-tom.

So Colonel Guthrie advanced towards this redoubtable hill stronghold, seeing nothing but dense greenery and outcrops of rock, and hearing all round him the sound of negro horns, now soft and low, welcoming, beseeching, now loud and threatening, daring him to come farther, now with a shrill wild clangour, warning those behind that the white man was come in force. But he advanced very slowly,

making all the signs he could that he came in peace. On he came, on and on, and there must have been some amongst his followers who feared lest he risked too much, and some who, seeing he had got so far unmolested, would gladly have risked all and made a dash for the huts, whose grey smoke they could see streaming up in the clear morning air above the dense greenery.

But Colonel Guthrie held them all, and, stretching out his hand, he called out that he came in peace, that he had come by the Governor's orders to make them an offer of peace, and that the white people eagerly desired it. If the Maroons had only known it, it was a great confession of failure on the part of the arrogant whites. Back came the answer in negro jargon that the Maroons too desired peace, and they begged that the troops might be kept back. They had reverted to savagedom, these people; the men were warriors and hunters, having from two to six wives, who tilled the ground as well as bore the children. I can imagine what a danger they must have been, set in the midst of a slave population; for one thing, they were always ready to carry off the black women. And now Colonel Guthrie had come to put an end to it all.

He shouted that he would send someone to them to show the confidence he had in their sincerity, and to explain the terms of peace.

To this they agreed, and Dr Russell was elected for the purpose, and a brave man he must have been.

"He advanced very confidently towards their huts," says the historian, "near which he was met by two Maroons, whom he informed of the purport of his message and asked if either of them were Cudjoe." They were not Cudjoe, but they promised him if no one followed him he should see the negro

leader. The horns had ceased. All on that mountain-side were awaiting the great event. The two men called out in the Koromantyn language, and upon all the surrounding rocks and ledges and fallen trees appeared the warriors. Very like the Ashanti of to-day they probably were with fierce dark faces, their wool brushed back above the sloping forehead and gleaming white teeth, with necklaces of seeds or bones or beads about their necks and machetes, and sometimes long muskets in their hands. And the white messenger stood there and addressed them, they were supposed to understand English and probably did understand the gist of his speech. He said that Cudjoe was a brave and a good man, and he was sure he would come down and show a disposition to live in peace and friendliness with the white people.

The negro chief had driven them to woo him with soft words, and he did not understand the greatness of his victory, or perhaps he would have driven a harder bargain.

Several Maroons came forward, amongst them one whom it was easy to see was their leader. And behold the great negro chief who had kept the country at bay, for whose reduction regiments had been sent from England, was a monstrous misshaped dwarf, humpbacked, with strongly marked African features, "and a peculiar wildness in his manner." He was clad in rags. He had on the tattered remains of an old blue coat, of which the skirts and the sleeves below the elbows were missing, round his head was a dirty white cloth, so dirty it was difficult to realise its original colour, a pair of loose drawers that did not reach the knees covered his substantial short legs, and he wore a hat that was only a crown, for the rim had long

since gone. A bag of large slugs and a cow's horn full of powder was slung on his right side, and on his left, hung by a narrow leather strap under his arm, a sharp knife, or as they called it then, a "mushet" or "couteau." A miserable savage after all was the great negro chief, and all his person was smeared with the red earth of the cockpits. Neither he nor his followers had a shirt to their names, though all had guns and cutlasses.

And the squat, dwarf-like chieftain who had held up the island was nervous. Facing the white man, who looked down upon him, he shifted uneasily as a negro would, and at last Russell offered to change hats with him—a brave man indeed, but the island was in straits! Upon this the Maroons came down armed, and Colonel Guthrie and the other white men came forward unarmed, and Colonel Guthrie held out his hand. The emotional African seized it and kissed it—he must have been a slave once, he knew so well what the white men expected—and threw himself on the ground, embracing Colonel Guthrie's knees, kissing his feet, and asking his pardon. He was humble, penitent, abject, clearly he did not understand the situation. And the rest of the Maroons, following the example of their chieftain, prostrated themselves, and the long dreaded black freebooters were won over to the side of the white people.

Then and there upon that mountain-side it was decreed that henceforward all hostilities between the Maroons and the whites should cease "for ever," they said grandiloquently, that all the Maroons except those who had joined during the past two years should live in a state of freedom and liberty, that even the exceptions should have full pardon if they were willing to return to their former

masters, and even if they did not wish to return, "they shall remain in subjection to Captain Cudjoe, and in friendship with us."

Oh, it was a glorious victory—for the Maroons!

They were to have all the lands round Trelawny Town and the cockpits, with liberty to plant and dispose of their increase, and they might hunt wherever they thought fit, provided they did not come within three miles of "any penn, settlement, or crawle," which seems to have been a privilege they could easily take, whether the white people liked it or not.

In their turn, they bound themselves to help put down any rebellion, or to help against any foreign invasion, a white man was to live amongst them, and they were to bring back runaway negroes. And finally, it was required of them that Captain Cudjoe and his successors were to wait on the Governor or Commander-in-Chief at least once a year.

And there was another Maroon victory, this time scored by the Windward Maroons in the east of the colony. These were under Quao, and as communication with Cudjoe's party was difficult, they knew nothing of the peace that had been made. A party of soldiers was sent out against them; these soldiers were new to the hills. For three days they wandered through the densely wooded mountain-land, and then they came upon the footsteps of men and dogs, saw the smoke of fires, and arrived at seventy houses with a fire burning in each, and jerked hog still broiling upon the coals.

It never occurred to them that such houses were of little value, easily made, for the material lay all around, and that the woods abounded in pigs. They were better used to the parade ground than to the woodland, and they saw nothing strange or

sinister in the fact that those in flight had left a trail that even they could follow, and so they went on blindly, till suddenly, as they were laboriously making their way down to the sea, the Maroons fell upon their rear.

"The militia fled," says Dallas, "and the baggage negroes to the number of seventy threw down their loads and followed. The regulars took shelter under the perpendicular projection of a mountain that overhung the stream, whence they could hear the Maroons talking, though they could see nothing of them. In this situation, almost hid from the enemy, they remained four hours up to their waists in water, exposed to the heat of a vertical sun and apprehensive of being taken alive and tortured."

They had fired at the smoke of the Maroon guns, and by this means got rid of all their ammunition, but they were safe enough where they were so long as the enemy did not come directly in front. At last, when a shot was fired from that direction it seemed to them they must get away at all costs, and they made a dash across the river which brought the whole of the Maroon marksmen upon them. Their dead they abandoned, which was right enough, but they abandoned their wounded also. Harassed, fatigued, defeated men, they fled back to the quarters in St George's they had left with such high hopes three days before.

And those who were left behind? The Maroons probably came down and butchered them, but one man certainly told them of the peace made with Cudjoe's Maroons in the west. It seemed to them hardly likely, but they debated whether they should spare his life and send him to the Governor an emissary, to say that they too would like to come in on the same terms. Poor soldier of the eighteenth

century, whose name even we do not know. Quao and his leading men were rather in favour of sending him. But the soldier's evil star was in the ascendant. There arose an Obeah woman, and she declared that the powers of darkness demanded the life of the white man who had fallen into their hands, and they struck off his head with a machete.

Again the Government decided this was an enemy who were too strong for them, and three months later Captain Adair went out with another party, not to fight but to make peace. By the purest accident they captured a horn-man, and him they told of the offer, dealing with him gently, probably greatly to his surprise. And from him they heard how the Maroons had discussed the news told by the luckless soldier. Since by a miracle it was true, he agreed gladly to lead the soldiers to their town, only impressing upon them how impossible it would be to take it by force. Captain Adair gave himself up to the guidance of the horn-man. And the story of Cudjoe and the Western Maroons was repeated, only Captain Adair had not so great a difficulty in convincing the savage warriors of his good intention. The massacred soldier had helped him greatly there.

"After some parley they agreed to exchange a captain for the purposes of settling preliminaries."

That savage leader must have been an artist. There was a touch of true drama in the way he staged the scene. No sooner had these things been agreed upon than the Maroons, each with a stroke of his machete, cleared more than an acre of light brushwood on the side of the mountain and so exposed to the view of the soldiers the whole body of savage warriors ranged on the slope in order of battle.

Standing thus, the two parties came to an agree-

ment, and not till that was done were the soldiers allowed to enter the town with their drums beating.

The horn-man was right. It would have been wellnigh impossible to take that town, for as they climbed up one steep hill and down another they noted the holes dug to cover the defenders, and the crossed sticks for resting the guns with which they had enfiladed every angle, that from the steepness it was necessary to make in ascending.

But the white men by favour were in the town and they left there a Lieutenant Thicknesse as a hostage, and he told afterwards that Quao's children could not refrain from striking their pointed fingers at his breast as they would have done knives, calling "Buckra! Buckra!" The women, he says, wore by way of decoration necklaces of human teeth, which they declared were white men's, and the jawbone of the unfortunate who had brought the first intelligence of Cudjoe's peace adorned one of their horns, a truly Ashanti way of making memorial of a slain ambassador.

And thus the white men came to terms with the Maroons of the east as they had done with those of the west, and the weary island breathed freely and sighing, said at least they had disposed of one danger—and so they had—for more than fifty years. That is to say, the white people of Jamaica had adapted themselves to the thorn which was for ever in their side.

The Maroons, they say, far excelled in strength and symmetry all the other negroes in Jamaica. They were blacker, taller and handsomer. Once they were at peace, the life of a Maroon was far from being unhappy, even though white men lived among them nominally to rule them. Their mountain homes were cool and healthy, fully ten or fifteen

degrees of temperature below that of Montego Bay or Falmouth, and the surroundings were lovely.

From the mountain-side where we dwelt at the Hyde, we looked out over wooded hill and valley, coconut palms cut the sky-line, in the deeper hollows was the vivid green of sugar cane, and the bottoms between the hills were pasture land whereon were mules and horses and cattle, red and white. Always it was hill and dale, woodland and pasture, and flamboyant trees made splashes of gorgeous colour, there were clumps of dark green pimento trees like the myrtle groves wherein the gods of ancient Greece held high revel, there were orange trees and lemon trees with golden fruit and white blossoms that filled the air with fragrance; by moonlight it was fairyland and with the dawn all along the valleys and low-lands and in the clefts of the hills lay a fleecy, soft grey mist, the softest, tenderest mist that refreshed the land and added to its luxuriant fertility. And a little higher up, standing beneath a symmetrical broad leaf or a giant cotton tree, it was possible to see the blue Caribbean flecked with white waves or stilly reflecting the cloudless blue sky above. A lovely land the Maroons had for themselves for all time, and they loved it these long lithe warrior slaves with the quick wild and fiery eyes. But savages they were, and it was to keep some sort of check upon them that a white superintendent with helpers was set to live amongst them. Principally it seemed he was there to see that they did not maintain too friendly relations with the slaves from the plantations. He was bound to reside in the town, from which he could not be absent longer than a fortnight, and every three months he had to make a return on oath to the Governor of the number residing in his town, how many were able to bear

arms, how many were fit for duty, the number of women and children, their increase and decrease.

So the white people kept in touch with their former enemies.

And the principal job of those enemies was to bring in runaways. They did that undoubtedly, and presently a law was passed allowing not only the usual reward, but a little extra if the slave was brought in alive.

They might have dances among themselves, and provided the dance was in the daytime with a small number of slaves. But the slaves were not to gather in Maroon Town and they were not to hold slaves of their own.

And lest they should be a danger to the country no party in pursuit of runaways was to consist of more than twelve men and was not to remain out more than twenty days, and before they went out they had to be provided with a written order from their superintendent. They were not to be employed by any white person without a written agreement and they were not to be whipped or otherwise ill-treated, and as they increased fast they had the right to relinquish their rights as Maroons and to live elsewhere in the island as free blacks.

Some of these laws had very little attention paid them. They kept slaves and bought them, they wandered about the island apparently wherever they chose, and many of them formed temporary connections with the women on the plantations. And so slack were they in their search for runaways that a large body of these emulated the Maroons themselves, and lived for over twenty years in the heart of the mountains between the eastern and the western Maroons.

The planters made no objections to their con-

nections with their slaves, for the children of such connections belonged to them and were likely to have the strength and vigour of their fathers. But though the Maroons left these children in bondage as carelessly as did the whites in like case, still the connections thus formed must have broken away in a small measure the bitterness that was supposed to exist between the Maroon and the slave, and every child by his very vigour deepened the danger that for ever threatened the planters.

However, it was peace between the planters and the black freebooters, nominally at least for over fifty years. Doubtless there was much friction and discontent, but things always quieted down, till in 1795 the smouldering fire broke into flames again.

The causes of the second Maroon war as given by Dallas and others point to gross mismanagement on the part of someone, but we can hardly judge now of the provocation on either side.

Anyhow, there was trouble with the superintendent, a white man whom the Maroons liked and trusted, but who apparently was so slack he was away from his post for weeks at a time, and the Government suspended him and placed another man in his place. Then two Maroons, whom the Maroons openly said they counted of little worth, stole some hogs, and were apprehended and taken to Montego Bay and given thirty-nine lashes by—and there lay the sting for the unconquered Maroons—a common slave in the workhouse.

This was strongly resented and the Maroons threw out their new superintendent, and we can imagine the excitement and dismay in Montego Bay when the dismissed man came riding down the mountains. The inhabitants doubtless looked with relief upon the grey stone walls of the fort that

overlooked the bay, and took care to have in order those stout stone houses with walls over two feet thick. I have lived in one of them. Those walls certainly would have been a protection against a savage foe.

The militia were called out and moved forward into the woods. So small is the island, so close they were, that Maroon Town can only have been about seventeen miles from Montego Bay, even taking into account all the hairpin-turns, and it was nothing like that as the crow flies.

It can hardly have been pleasant to have a band of bloodthirsty savages so close, and here the sycophant Bridges, who for some reason does not spare Lord Balcarres, the new Governor of the island, and blamed him for the second Maroon war, becomes quite poetical on the subject of the meeting of the militia with the enemy.

"The militia," he says, "moved forward to the supposed scene of action and were met in the woods by a Maroon of exquisite symmetry and noble address, who descended the side of the mountain with the step of an antelope, and giving a wild and graceful flourish to his lance presented a letter requesting a conference with the chief magistrate of the district and with certain other individuals whom it named. The proposal was accepted and their terms heard."

They wanted their superintendent back and they got him, and they had all the children in their town baptized as an evidence of good faith; they went further still, and when the authorities requested their leaders to come in, they came in, thirty-nine of them, came in peace, and those same authorities, who vowed all they desired was peace, promptly bound the hands of all but old Montague the chief

behind them, marched them through the streets of the town with crowds of slaves jeering at them and shut them up in Montego Bay jail. To be behind any walls must have been hard; for these free mountaineers to be confined in an eighteenth century jail in summer in the tropics must have been a purgatory for which we can have no words. One of them put an end to his life by tearing out his bowels. Yet so utterly blind were the authorities that they took two of the men and sent them back to their own people "to induce them to surrender!"

It doubtless came as a surprise to the whites that these two messengers instead of recommending instant surrender did exactly the opposite. At any rate, "upon the report they made of the reception and treatment of the thirty-seven, the Maroons, far from following the others" (I am quoting Dallas) "immediately set fire to both their towns." When they surrendered in 1739, their numbers did not exceed 600, but when the second war broke out they had increased to over 1400, and when we remember that they dwelt among impregnable mountains and held the back settlers at their mercy, we can understand in a measure the divided councils that led to the war. Many men thought nothing was too bad for a Maroon, and it would be safer to extirpate them. They would have treated them as we treat dangerous vermin, killed them whenever and wherever they got the chance. We have only to read Bridges thirty years later to know how some of the colonists thought of the men with African blood in their veins.

"They had not been watched with that vigilance which African perfidy requires," says Bridges, speaking of the slaves in one place, and what applied to the slaves applied still more to the Maroons. Everyone

felt they must be coerced. They were a danger to the country, and while I sympathise with them very strongly, I think they were. Undoubtedly, apart from any particular provocation, if Jamaica were to be held as a slave country, these 1400 free black people dwelling in the heart of her mountains had to be subdued at any cost. They were talking of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in England, and doubtless the planters feared the effect of such talk both upon their slaves and the Maroons, should they come to hear of it.

"These insolent savages must be subdued," said the colony with the Governor at their head, and accordingly, unmindful of the lessons of over fifty years ago, set out to subdue them by the old methods. But there were roads up to Maroon Town now, roads made and kept open by the Maroons themselves, roads winding and narrow, cut along the hillside among the tropical greenery; the mango and easily-grown bamboo, the beautiful ackee with its bright green leaves and brilliant red pods, orange trees, the dark green coffee with its fragrant white flower, and annotto with its clusters of ruby berries. But the soldiers noticed none of these things. They went up and up, and they must have found it very hard work in August.

Their leader, Colonel Sandford, knew little enough about bush fighting, but he was joined by Mr Robertson, the Commanding Officer at Fort Dalling and the owner of a pen in the neighbourhood, and he brought with him a Trelawny Town Maroon named Thomas, who undertook to act as guide to the white forces and faithfully carried out his pact. Colonel Sandford got so far that he saw the Maroons on the heights between their town and Schaw Castle, a pen in the mountains, and probably would have

been content with his success had he not received from Lord Balcarres an order to take New Town. The way was a long defile between the mountains, and just at the hour of sunset he entered it at the head of his dragoons. The enemy let them get well into the defile, the column was half its length, and when it had gone two-thirds of the way they let off, all down the left of that column from one end to the other in the darkening light, a tremendous volley of small arms, they themselves being hidden from sight by trees and rocks. It was the old, old tactics of Cudjoe that you would have thought the island men at least might have expected. But in Cudjoe's day there had been no roads. Perhaps it was that well-made road that deceived them.

There was only one thing to be done; they must reach the open spaces round the town out of reach of these marksmen hidden behind the trees. They quickened their pace, urged on by the cries of the wounded and groans of the dying. Luckily, in the uncertain light the marksmanship had not been very good, or I do not know how anyone could have escaped. Then, just as they reached Old Town there was another shot, and Colonel Sandford fell. He was dead. And the wildest panic ensued. At least this is what Dallas says. There was but one thought uppermost in their minds — to get away. Undoubtedly they could have held the town had there been anyone whom they trusted to lead them, and undoubtedly they made no such effort. There was no one whose orders they would obey. The darkness gave them just the help they needed. In the murk and pouring rain they squelched their way down the slippery mountain paths, sure that dragoons were totally unfitted for mountain warfare, and so overjoyed at their escape from a handful of savages that they

fired off their muskets, made a tremendous row, and generally misbehaved themselves. It is all very well to think scorn of them now, but the densely-wooded mountains were terrible, they had seen their leader fall and they were certainly both by training and equipment totally unfitted to cope with savages on the warpath.

That night there was a riotous scene. Lord Balcarres, we are told, having slipped on a plank made slippery by the rain had "a contusion over the eye," if he hadn't been a lord and the Governor it would have been a black eye, and it might well have been attributed to another cause. But it did not add to his beauty, and the soldiers rushing into the camp wild with delight at having escaped, made such an uproar that only the Governor could cope with it. The night, indeed, was disgraceful to both sides, for the Maroons, instead of following up their very great success, retired to their town and recruited their spirits with such copious draughts of rum as made them "frantic and desperate." Sixty of them by their own account lay in a state of insensibility till two o'clock the next day, when with the assistance of the women and the less intoxicated men they were removed to the cockpits of Petit River. Had the troops gone up that morning, more than a fourth of the young Maroon men must have fallen into their hands.

"It is much to be regretted," says Dallas, who wrote within seven years of the catastrophe, and at least must have known something of the general talk, "that the panic by which the troops were hurried away to headquarters prevented their occupying the site of the Old Town after they were in possession of it, and might have maintained it without resistance. The immediate encamping there would not

only have saved the lives of many who died of their wounds, or through fatigue, but would have left on the minds of the Maroons an impression that even their defiles were not to be depended on; whereas abandoning the town was giving them a triumph and confirming their reliance on their position."

In this disastrous affair there fell Colonel Sandford of the dragoons, Colonel Gallimore of the militia, fifteen dragoons, thirteen militia, eight volunteers and not a single Maroon. No wonder they celebrated a victory. It is to the credit of the Maroons that none of the wounded were taken and put to torture, but most died where they fell or crawled into the woods and died for want of the help that was not forthcoming, although they were within so short a distance of the town on the seashore below, and close to so many pens and plantations. Colonel Gallimore's body was never found, and though the Maroons yielded up watches, knives, pencils, and other things from the dead and wounded, nothing of his was ever forthcoming. So it is thought he must have been wounded and crawling away, favoured by the coming darkness, have found some retreat where he died for want of care. Dallas says he was a brave, active man much beloved, but he was never seen again, and the dense woodlands of the cockpits have never so far as I know yielded up their secrets.

Things could not be left so. It was resolved to surround the scene of action, and they called up reinforcements, 100 men from the 62nd Regiment, a detachment of the 17th Light Dragoons and large bodies of militia. The soldiers could and did get at the provision grounds and destroy them, though all round they could hear the weird blowing of the Maroon horns, mournful, threatening, even trium-

phant and defiant. They were not beaten, they were not going to be beaten, said those horns. "Wait till we get you!" and then the angry soldiers fired into the gullies at random, and the mountains echoed and re-echoed to the noise of the discharge, and the Maroons were not a penny the worse, for even the destruction of their provision grounds did not worry them over much. They knew where to get fresh supplies.

And it rained and rained and rained. In these mountains where it is lush and green and the vegetation grows riotously, there is sometimes as much as 30 inches of rain in a month. All the paths were slimy and slippery, every overhanging branch held a heavy shower-bath, the men were soaked to their skins again and again, laying the foundation as everyone believed of all the deadly fevers with which the country was credited.

The only comfort they had was that things were a little disturbing to the enemy too, for hidden in the bush the attacking party found various trunks containing articles of linen and plate, the result of raids on the plantations, and many of the dragoons up here in the rain furnished themselves with chintz nightgowns. I like that last touch. Yet all the time the Maroons were so close in the jungle they could hear the orders given but did not attack, because they feared the white men were too far in to run away and were in such numbers they, the Maroons, could not escape if driven to bay.

But having conceded so much to the valour of the white men, they did pretty much as they pleased, even passing the soldiers camped at Vaughansfield at eleven o'clock one night and burning the buildings on a pen only six miles away on the road to Montego Bay. There was consternation in Montego Bay and

thankfulness, that at least headquarters was between the town and the dreaded enemy. The raid quickened up the preparations, they dragged guns up the steep and slippery defiles that converged upon the Old Town, found no Maroons there, though round in the mountains the horns were calling defiance, and they recovered the bodies of Colonel Sandford and eighteen of those who had fallen with him.

Lord Balcarres grew tired of this unprofitable warfare and went back to Montego Bay, and, extraordinary as it seems now, they put a price on the heads of Palmer and Parkinson, the men who had been sent back to tell the other Maroons what had happened to the thirty-seven men who had come in, for they said these men had instigated the rebellion. But that these two always denied. They always maintained that when the Maroons heard what had happened to their messengers of peace, each man of his own accord set fire to his house, determined to die rather than come in.

And so bitter were they, not unnaturally, that a captain of Accompong Maroons, who had gone by a secret path to persuade them to surrender, was promptly shot because they feared he knew too much about the approaches to their strongholds.

The great mistake probably lay in bringing in soldiers who could know nothing of the difficulties of the country. There must have been many stalwart young men, in fact we know there were, who were expert hunters and woodsmen and fully competent to deal with such an enemy. The difficulty was the leader. Brave men were a drug in the market, a clever leader almost impossible to find. Counsels were always divided. A soldier fresh from Europe or from the parade ground clearly was not the right man, but it always ended in a soldier being chosen.

When Lord Balcarres gave up a command which did not seem likely to cover him with glory, he handed it over to Colonel Fitch, and General Reid came and occupied the quarters at Vaughansfield with detachments of militia from the St James, Hanover and Westmoreland regiments. They marched and they counter-marched, and the militia quarrelled with the regulars and they both consumed an immense amount of ammunition and food, but came no nearer to getting those Maroons. And still it rained and the militia grew sick of the fruitless job, declared they had work on their plantations that must be attended to—the companies were relieved every fortnight, and it grew more and more difficult to collect men to take their place. And Colonel Fitch with the aid of slaves set about the clearing of the country as well as he was able, but it was a job that is not finished yet, so he only got a little done, and the Maroons used to come into the hills above his quarters and call him, and at last he responded to their call and they told him they only wanted a free pardon and a promise that they should not be sent from the island. This seemed to him reasonable enough and he promised to do what he could for them, and allowed two of them to go on a safe conduct to visit their friends imprisoned at Montego Bay.

It was a wrong move. The Governor, dreading lest the Maroons should raid the little town, had had the prisoners moved to a vessel in the bay for their better security, and the men returned reporting that they were in a ship and were evidently going to be taken away. From that time no more Maroons visited Colonel Fitch; they were prepared to die for their freedom.

But in true barbaric fashion they saw to it that

a goodly company should attend them across the river. Colonel Fitch, preparatory to an assault, set gangs of slaves to clear the ground with companies of militia to guard them, and the Maroons laid an ambush and killed ten of the slaves and six of the militia, so that I presume clearing away undergrowth was popular neither with soldiers nor bondsmen. This certainly set the slaves against the Maroons. The militia were already as hostile as was possible.

I cannot say too often it was an awful country. There was a certain Captain Lee who commanded an advance post set in the dense jungle and fenced by high palisades, and he complained that from the hillsides above the Maroons could shoot into it, and he asked Colonel Fitch to move it. Accordingly Colonel Fitch, bent on seeing things for himself, with Colonel Jackson and several other officers, and accompanied by two Accompong Maroons went to inspect. The Accompongs did not like the job. They declared the Maroons were too close, and pointed out where they had thrown away the heads of wild cocos and eddoes, broad-leaved plants, and the leaves were not yet withered. But the white men, with incredible folly which perhaps does them credit, were unwilling to go back before they had accomplished something, and, persuading Colonel Fitch to allow them to go ahead, Colonel Jackson and one or two others went on, still accompanied by the unwilling Accompongs, and followed slowly by the Commanding Officer till they came to a place where the road forked. They were descending now so steep a declivity that they could only go one at a time, holding on by their hands. Then history repeated itself. There was a tremendous volley of small arms, an officer named Brisset was seen staggering among the bushes, both the Accompongs

fell dead, and Colonel Jackson ran back on ground lower than the path. We can see him stooping low to escape possible shots, taking all advantage he could of the cover till he came back to Colonel Fitch, seated on a fallen tree, his arm supported by a projecting stump and his head resting on his hand. Once more the Maroons had got the Commander-in-Chief. The blood was trickling from the middle of his waistcoat, and the short red and brown striped linen jacket which he wore stuck out behind "as if a rib had been broken." Such was Colonel Jackson's description. He was mortally wounded. Jackson caught his hand.

"It is Jackson, your friend Jackson. Look at me," and he drew out a dagger, saying that he should not fall alive into the hands of the Maroons and he would die with him rather than leave him. Remember, they all feared torture. The dying man turned his face towards his friend (he was at peace with all men now, even with the Maroons) and looked at him kindly, though he was past speech, and then Jackson heard the cocking of guns, click, click, click, one after another, horribly close, and called to the soldiers to lie down, and tried to drag his friend down beside him. But Fitch resisted, turning his head as if he too would have spoken to the men, and so, though little harm was done to the men who had obeyed the order promptly, their dying leader was shot again through the forehead and there was no need for Jackson to consider his condition any longer.

It was a great victory for the Maroons. Several of the party were killed and many more wounded, among them the Captain Lee, who had come in because his little palisaded fort was hardly tenable. Colonel Jackson collected the men from Lee's post

and took them all back to Colonel Fitch's quarters, where one died the next morning and Captain Lee a day or two later. Eight altogether were killed and seven wounded, but none were more regretted than Colonel Fitch. We are told he was tall and graceful, and a charming young man.

"He threw around his hut," says Dallas, using the language of the time, "a certain elegance that bespoke the gentleman. His private virtues endeared him to his friends to whom his death was a deep wound."

Great was the consternation in Jamaica, for riot was let loose in the mountains. Seventy men were dead and twenty-three were wounded. Listen to the tale of rapine. Brook's House was burnt; Schaw Castle was burnt; Bandon was burnt; Shand's was burnt; Stephen and Bernard's House was burnt; Kenmure was burnt and twelve negroes carried away. Darliston trash-house was burnt; Catadupa, Lapland, and Mocha were burnt and two negroes carried away. There is a little block-house of stone on Lapland with loopholes in the walls, a most substantial place, but the roof has not been on in the memory of anyone living, and I wondered very much whether this was the Lapland that was burnt by the Maroons; and we passed by Mocha, connected by an aerial rope railway on which were slung cars that descended with bananas to the country below. All these steep hillsides are flourishing fields of bananas now. Catadupa is lovely as its name, and there are one or two cottages there in which winter visitors may stay, revelling in a climate where the days are delightful, the nights gorgeous, and the mornings and evenings divine.

Those freebooters did well. Not a man of them is known to have suffered. No wonder the colony

was roused to a simmer of excitement. I wonder—as probably some of the colonists wondered—why the slaves did not rise in a body, join these men of their own colour and make a bold bid for freedom.

General Walpole was put in command, and he began entirely different tactics. He taught his men to take cover as the Maroons did, so that there are accounts of actions in which a great deal of powder was expended and no man was killed on either side, and he began to clear the country round the mountains, but as for trying to keep the Maroons penned in he knew better. "It would have been just as feasible as to pen pigeons in a meadow." He employed working negroes under cover of strong advanced parties to clear the heights that surrounded his camp, the approaches to the Maroon defile, and an eminence near to his headquarters, which almost looked into a cockpit. And always he kept the soldiers on the move, harrying the Maroons successfully on the whole, but once a sergeant and ten men took a wrong turning, a thing easy enough to do in the mountains, and got into the Maroon defile, and presently the men who were waiting for that sergeant to bring them some more ammunition heard heavy firing, and not one man returned to tell the tale.

And the soldiers kept clearing the country, and the Maroons kept breaking out in unexpected places, and raiding "like wild creatures of the forest, they found issues at every point."

Still General Walpole had high hopes. The dry season would come with the winter months, and where he knew there was a spring he could get at, he mounted a howitzer and threw shells into the cockpit just beyond it. And some of the springs go dry in the dry season, and it was not likely the

Maroons were thrifty and conserved water. Though the rains in the mountains are plenteous in their season, I have myself seen the people come miles from that cockpit country with kerosene tins upon their heads to get water from the nearest spring which happened to be upon the Hyde.

They did object to General Walpole. "Dam dat little buckra," said the Maroons, "he cunning more dan dem toder. Dis here da new fashion for fight. Him fire him big ball a'ter we an' wen de big ball top de dam sunting fire we agen. Come boys, make we go take farer an' see wha he do den?"

And they did go farther and were driven out again. But the soldiers had to be fed, and one day the Maroons surprised a convoy of provisions, captured the ten soldiers guarding it, and cut off their heads, and always they raided the negro provision grounds whether the slave owners liked it or not, and kept themselves well supplied. The soldiers were doing better, but the Maroons were still a thorn in their side, and the war threatened to be long and prolonged, which was bad for the prestige of the white people if nothing else. For nearly five months this body of untrained negroes had defied the military force of the island.

The Governor called a council at Falmouth, a town on the north coast, twenty miles from Montego Bay—a very despondent council—and it was actually proposed, to the wrath of General Walpole, to send into the woods some of the Maroon chiefs confined at Montego Bay, men who had been confined in irons, as ambassadors to persuade the rebels to make peace!

Falmouth is not a town that attracts me, though it has a fine situation right at the sea-shore just beyond

the mouth of the Martha Brae, and it is reminiscent of the days of long ago. The houses without verandahs, without even a creeper over their bare white walls, in streets without the vestige of a tree, look hot with the tropical sun pouring down upon them, but it was an important place in those times, for it has a harbour into which quite big ships may come, and those houses to which I objected are all mahogany floored with mahogany and mahoe panelling against the walls, truly the houses of rich people. In the courthouse, where probably they held this meeting, for it is one of the largest houses in the town, the mahogany flooring is simply magnificent, and kept with a shining polish that could not well be excelled in any great house in London or New York, while from the ceiling hang most splendid chandeliers of cut glass. They hold balls in that room occasionally, and then they light those chandeliers, and all the thousand and one facets of the cut glass reflect the light back on to the dark, highly polished flooring, and the deep dark flooring reflects it back again, and the girls of Trelawny and St James have as magnificent a setting for their youth and beauty in this remote corner of the Empire as ever have girls in London Town. And here, more than a hundred years ago, the Governor of the colony and all the important men met to decide what they should do with a party of banditti who only eighteen miles away were setting the whole island at defiance.

Disaffected, unconquered, they formed a rallying point for every discontented slave in the island. There lay the danger, the danger that was with them always.

But no one had any proposition to make till a certain Mr Quarrell, who had a plantation near to

Bluefields, suggested that they should bring dogs, the hunting dogs the Spaniards kept to run down their slaves, from Cuba.

Curiously enough, a people who seem to have hesitated at no barbarity where their slaves were concerned, hesitated over this matter. What would the rest of the world think of them if they hunted men with dogs? However, necessity knows no law, and finally it was agreed to send Mr Quarrell to Cuba to get the dogs, and the men who could manage them.

The tale of the bringing of those dogs reads like an epic in itself. Mr Quarrell embarked in the schooner *Mercury*, carrying twelve guns, and the crew of the *Mercury* consisted of four British seamen, one of whom was made captain, twelve Curacoa negroes, and eighteen Spanish renegadoes, and they appear to have been as nice a parcel of blackguards as a man might well gather together in those times. Throughout the voyage, the English who were on board found it necessary to keep possession of the cabin and quarter-deck, and to keep all the arms under their own charge. It was a long story of tribulation, but finally after infinite difficulties, Quarrell shipped forty chasseurs and one hundred and four dogs. They were big dogs, like powerful greyhounds, and I suspect were something like the kangaroo dogs that were so common in Australia when I was a child, greyhounds crossed with some other breed to give them bulk and strength. The chasseur was armed only with a machete, and the dogs were not supposed to tear the man they came up with, but if he made no resistance to hold him and bark for assistance. It would be no good resisting man and dog, for the steel of the machetes was excellent, and they were about eighteen inches

long, formidable weapons. Dallas says these dogs and their keepers were employed in Cuba for taking runaways and breaking up bodies of negroes collected for hostile purposes, which is "sometimes occasioned," he remarks quaintly, "by the rigour exercised on the Spanish plantations."

The *Mercury* was a luckless ship. She ran ashore on a sandbank and appeared likely to leave her bones there. They had shipped cattle to feed the dogs, and on that dark night the dogs broke loose and seized the cattle, and the bellowing of the cattle, the howling of the dogs, the wild wail of the wind, the roaring of the waves as they washed over the little ship, all combined to make pandemonium, and Quarrell must have felt the Maroons' luck was holding. Even when they got her off and arrived at Montego Bay their ill-luck pursued them, for from the little fort on the hillside that was a haven of refuge to the townspeople there came a volley of grape-shot, the officer in command having mistaken the *Mercury* for an enemy's privateer! Luckily, they don't appear to have been good marksmen for no one was hurt, and the little ship came to anchor with some American ships between her and the guns.

Amidst immense excitement the dogs and their guardians were landed. We can imagine it. How the news flew from house to house, the Maroons were to be hunted with these immense dogs with which the Spaniards never failed to bring down their slaves. And the house slaves listened round-eyed and passed on the news to the field labourers and the streets of the town—those shamefully shadeless streets were thronged with people half-fearing, half-comforted with the reflection that soon the hills above the town would no longer be occupied by the savage Maroons. And, indeed, one hundred and

four great dogs, even though muzzled and held by great rattling chains, ferociously making at every strange object and dragging the chasseurs after them, must have made a formidable array. Every door in the town was barred and the people crowded to the windows, out of reach of the dogs who were to be their salvation. And they were hurried up the mountains, paraded before the General and—never used.

But it was time they came. The dry weather was now come, the canes were very inflammable, it was difficult to defend some of the estates, especially those in the beautiful and fertile Nassau Valley, down which wanders the Black River, and it was reported that a large body of slaves were preparing to join the victorious Maroons. And then up that mountain path, the very same I dare say by which I went that December day, came the chasseurs with the dogs tugging at their waists, and the General held a review, a review at which the dogs grew so excited at the discharge of the guns that they flew at the stocks of the fusils which had been given to the chasseurs and tore them to pieces. The General himself had to flee before their onrush to his chaise, and it was only with difficulty they were restrained from tearing to pieces his horses. After which we are a little surprised to hear he expressed himself exceedingly pleased with the review. Perhaps it marks the desperateness of the situation.

And what the white men knew in the morning before nightfall had been carried into the mountains and the Maroons probably discussed this new evil that had befallen them. There could be but one end if the white men came against them with dogs—but one end. And doubtless General Walpole and his officers judged from the effect it had on the negroes

the consternation that was inspired in the mountains, and they agreed that now the simplest thing would be to make peace as Colonel Guthrie had done fifty-six years before. In the end the whites must win, but the blacks might set the country in a blaze and do many thousands of pounds worth of damage before they were all taken. Therefore they would compromise.

On the 14th December the dogs were landed at Montego Bay, and on the 18th Colonel Hull fell in with a party of Maroons under Johnson, and Johnson was their best leader. It was difficult to get into conversation with them, but the troops ceased firing and then the Maroon officers, who had some inkling of the offer that was to be made, were seen skipping about from rock to rock and Mr Werge of the 17th Light Dragoons, who seems to have been a very capable young man, with a cool, deliberate courage flung down his arms and stepping down the hill till he was close under them, called out that it was peace and they had better come down and shake hands upon it. Then Fowler the Maroon advanced and took him by the hand, and at Mr Werge's suggestion—he was as brave a young man as Dr Russell—they exchanged hats and jackets.

Relations once established, General Walpole came up and the Maroons agreed that, on their knees they would beg His Majesty's pardon, that they would go to the Old Town or Montego Bay or anywhere else the Governor might appoint, and would settle on whatever lands might be given them. They would give up all runaways. And General Walpole agreed to a secret clause that they should not be sent off the island.

And, indeed, the Maroons were in a bad way. They were short of provisions and measles had

broken out among them, and their women and children were almost famished.

The 1st of January 1796 was fixed for the day they should come in. But they were very distrustful. It was difficult to make them understand that no harm would be done them. Some few turned up, but practically the New Year's Day passed unnoticed. They straggled in by slow degrees, finding it exceedingly difficult to persuade themselves to abandon their mountain fastnesses for the tender mercies of the white man, but as a matter of fact all with the exception of the small parties out with Palmer and Parkinson came in within a fortnight of the day appointed, and the last were only out three months.

But the Assembly because of this laxness, felt they might break their pledged word, and they banished the majority of the Maroons with incredible foolishness, considering that the negro line is supposed to be drawn at the 40th parallel of latitude, to Nova Scotia. Perhaps they hoped to destroy them, root and branch. There, as was only to be expected, they did not do well, and finally they were taken to Sierra Leone, where I read they made valuable settlers and helped the colony greatly. I was glad they did. And then I remembered that in Free Town I had met the most bumptious, the most aggressive, the most unpleasant black men it has ever, except in Liberia, been my lot to come across, and I felt my sympathies weaken.

Jamaica was not unmindful of these her children whom she hated. For a small island she spent an enormous sum of money on their welfare. £46,000 was expended in trying to colonise them comfortably, and this was supplemented by the British Government.

General Walpole was bitterly angry. He had

given his word, and the country had broken it, and in his turn he declined to accept the sword of honour which the Assembly voted him in honour of his bloodless victory, and declined it in such terms that the Assembly considered the letter a misrepresentation of their proceedings and ordered it to be expunged from their minutes.

Not all of the Maroons were banished. Those who came in by the 1st of January 1796 were allowed to stay if they so pleased, and they settled about their old town and about Accompong, but their teeth were drawn. They were no greater danger now than any of the other black people. Less, in fact, for they had a certain contempt for the slaves, and regarded themselves as on a par with the white men.

The people about Maroon Town now do not think of themselves as Maroons. The day I went up, when we had gone as far as we could within a mile and a half of the old Maroon Town, the people came crowding round, and they looked much like the dark folks who lived lower down in the mountains. One yellow man brought me a can full of green coffee berries.

"No, not for sale, for the lady to remember we's by." I accepted the gift, so graciously given, and I asked the giver's name.

"Reed," said he, and I said I'd put him in a book, but I don't believe he understood what I said. I felt in my pocket. I know of old the African likes a return present, but I had forgotten my purse, and my host settled the difficulty.

"Take him round to the Chinaman's shop," he said to his driver, "and give him a drink," and my yellow friend, whom I thought must be grandson to one of those long-dead soldiers, accepted the offer with a smile.

CHAPTER IX

THE FOOTPRINTS OF THE YEARS

It is very difficult to understand the attitude towards trivial offences of people who lived in a time when the death penalty was legally inflicted for breaking down the banks of a fish pond, stealing anything over the value of a shilling from the person, or illegally felling trees.

With the last clause I have some sympathy. I sometimes feel I could cheerfully see the death penalty inflicted upon whoever was responsible for making Jamaican towns bare of trees, for decreeing that telephone and telegraph wires are of more importance than shade, and for clearing all the country roads so that a tropical sun makes them a purgatory for the unfortunate traveller, when Nature herself has arranged so much more wisely.

But that is somehow in another dimension, and I quite realise when white people were so hard on each other as they were a hundred years ago, we could not expect much consideration from them for the men they held in bondage.

The first negroes were brought to serve and for nothing else. There was some faint talk of making them Christians and saving their souls, but I am afraid it was of their untilled cane-pieces the planters were thinking when they crowded down to the reeking slave ships. They who believed, if they

gave the matter a thought, that any being who died unbaptized went out into outer darkness for eternity—only neither they nor we can grasp eternity—gave no welcome to the men who presently came to teach their slaves. They objected. Well, even in this year of our Lord 1922, I have actually, yes actually heard a woman, who certainly should have known better, declare: "You know, my dear, this teaching of the lower classes is really a great mistake. It lifts them out of their own class."

In all the mass of literature I have waded through about Jamaica I have met no one till I arrived at Matthew Lewis, writing of 1816, who looked at the negro with what we may call modern eyes. The Abolitionists patronised; they had an object in view, a great object, truly, but it was the cause for which they fought. Lewis was much more reasonable and sensible. We can read him as we might read a man of to-day, on the conditions around him. He saw Jamaica as I and people like me see it, and weighed both sides and held the balance true, for he is far less hampered by tradition than we might expect.

He landed at Savanna-la-Mar, which lies right upon the sea-shore, a sea-shore on which there is no cliff, and where the boundaries of land and water are by no means clearly defined. A wild tropical storm swept over it while I was there, and I thought of Matthew Lewis as the rain came slanting down the wide street, turning the scene into one dreary grey whole; sky, sea, land, we could hardly have told one from the other but for the houses that loomed up, grey blotches on the universal greyness. There were no trees, barely a sign of the riotous tropical vegetation, though presently the sun would be out in all his pride, and the whole town would

be craving for a little shade. But like many English colonists, the people of Savanna-la-Mar have decided that beauty, the beauty of trees and growing things, is not necessary in their town. If you want shade, what about corrugated iron?

I don't know what Savanna-la-Mar was like when Matthew Lewis landed there, but it was celebrating its holidays, the New Year of 1816, when the great gentleman arrived.

"Soon after nine o'clock we reached Savanna-la-Mar, where I found my trustee and a whole cavalcade awaiting to conduct me to my estate. He had brought with him a curricle and a pair for myself, a gig for my servant, two black boys upon mules, and a cart with eight oxen to convey my baggage."

It took a good deal to move a gentleman with dignity a hundred years ago. Nowadays it would have been: "We'll send the car for you, and your heavier baggage can come on by mule cart. You won't want it for a day or two, will you?"

And here he gives us the sort of picture to which we have become accustomed in reading about the good old times of slavery.

"Whether the pleasure of the negroes was sincere may be doubted"—a wise man and a human was Matthew Lewis. He really does not see any reason why the slaves should be fond of him or make a fuss over him, "but certainly it"—the welcome—"was the loudest that ever I witnessed; they all talked together, sang, danced, shouted, and in the violence of their gesticulations tumbled over each other and rolled on the ground. Twenty voices at once enquired after uncles and aunts and grandfathers and great-grandmothers of mine who had been buried long before I was in existence, and whom I verily

believe most of them only knew by tradition. One woman held up her little black child to me, grinning from ear to ear.

"Look, massa, look here! Him nice lilly neger for massa." Another complained—

"So long since none come see we, massa. Good massa, come at last."

He rather liked it though.

"All this may be palaver, but certainly they at least play their parts with such an air of truth and warmth and enthusiasm, that after the cold-hearted and repulsive manners of England this contrast is infinitely agreeable."

He went to a lodging-house first, and there he was met by a remarkably clean-looking negro lad with water and a towel. Lewis took it for granted that he belonged to the house. The lad waited some time and at last he said:

"Massa not know me; me your slave."

And here for the first time we find someone who feels uncomfortable at holding another in bondage.

"The sound made me feel a pang at the heart," he writes. And not because the boy was sad. Stirring within the poet was some feeling concerning the rights of man.

"The lad appeared all gaiety and good humour, and his whole countenance expressed anxiety to recommend himself to my notice; but the word 'slave' seemed to imply that although he did feel pleasure then in serving me, if he had detested me he must have served me still. I really felt quite humiliated at the moment, and was tempted to tell him.

"Do not say that again; say that you are my negro, but do not call yourself my slave."

And then again, when he was established in the

house, which he has left it on record was frightful to look at but very clean and comfortable inside, he remarks:

"This morning a little brown girl made her appearance with an orange bough to flap away the flies."

It had been impressed upon him that he courted death if he drank orangeade, if he walked in the morning after ten or went out in the cool of the evening, "be exposed to the dews after sundown" they put it. But he dares to write: "The air too was delicious, the fragrance of the sweetwood and other scented trees, but above all of the delicious logwood of which most of the fences in Westmoreland are made, composed an atmosphere such that if Satan after promising them a buxom air embalmed with odours, had transported Sin and Death thither the charming people must acknowledge their papa's promise fulfilled." It reads quaintly now. Sin—sin is so much a matter of the standard we set up. If the slave had copied the planter, no master would have considered him anything but a very sinful slave; and death—death is often very, very kindly.

Lewis enquires into the condition of the people. His attorney had written to him regularly of the care he expended on the negroes, but he had been away much of his time managing other estates, and had delegated his authority to an overseer who treated the people so harshly that at last they left the estate in a body and threw themselves on the protection of the magistrate at Savanna-la-Mar, "and if I had not come myself to Jamaica, in all probability I should never have had the most distant idea how abominably the poor creatures had been ill-used."

Now this marks a distinct advance since the times when the savages, speaking a jargon no one cared to understand, were driven to work with a whip.

Lewis, to the intense surprise of his compeers, objected to the use of the whip.

"I am, indeed, assured by everyone about me, that to manage a West Indian estate without the occasional use of a cart whip, however rarely, is impossible; and they insist upon it that it is absurd in me to call my slaves ill-treated, because when they act grossly wrong they are treated like English soldiers and sailors. All this may be very true; but there is something to me so shocking in the idea of this execrable cart whip that I have positively forbidden the use of it on Cornwall; and if the estate must go to rack and ruin without it, to rack and ruin the estate must go."

But, of course, all men were not as broad-minded as Lewis. Bridges, who wrote twelve years later, could never mention a negro without adding some disparaging adjective, "the vigilance which African perfidy requires." "Experience proves that a strange uniformity of barbarism pervades them all; and that the only difference lies in the degrees of the same base qualities which mark the negro race throughout." "The salutary measures were of little avail in winning over by indulgence, or restraining by terror the impracticable savages of Africa." Such are a few of the gems dispersed through his work. He could see no good in a black man, except that his thews and sinews were necessary to the development of the country, and he grudged them even that measure of praise.

In the ten years between 1752 and 1762, 71,115 negroes arrived in the island, "forced upon Jamaica by British merchants and English laws," says he,

though when England wanted to stop this inflow and to prohibit the slave trade, the Jamaican planters objected very strongly. They wanted these unwilling colonists. But since the majority of them were men, young, strong and lusty, and the Europeans were but a handful, it was necessary they should be ruled with a rod of iron. Bridges probably was right when he says that any relaxation was promptly attributed to fear. They had to be governed by fear and the people who are governed by fear, are crushed, broken, destroyed. How thoroughly destroyed we may see by reading statistics of the increase among the slaves, once the importation from Africa had ceased.

This whip that Lewis abolished was used on all occasions. A man was beaten because he did not work, and women were beaten till the blood flowed, because they suckled their babies during working hours, which extended, be it remembered, from five in the morning till seven at night—by law—with an interval of half an hour for breakfast and two hours for the mid-day meal. The women would protest that the little things were hungry and cried, but if the overseer or book-keeper were not kind that was no excuse. Presently there came a law that no slave was to receive more than thirty-nine lashes at once. It was time. They are said on occasion to have received more than 500. But there were ways of getting over the new law. There were men who kept within the letter and yet inflicted fiendish punishment. There is a story told of Barbadoes :

Two officers, Major Fitch and Captain Cook, hearing terrible cries, broke open a door and there found a negro girl chained to the floor being flogged by her master. The brute got out of their avenging hands—I am glad to think there was some pity in

that world—but he cried exultingly that he had only given her the thirty-nine lashes allowed by the law at one time, and that he had only inflicted this number three times since the beginning of the night, and that he intended to give her the fourth thirty-nine before morning. This was long before Lewis's time. It was told by Wilberforce, when pleading for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

There were tales enough, of course, of this description and the case against the planters—some of them—was pretty bad. A youth of nineteen was found wandering about the streets of Bridgetown, Barbadoes, by General Tottenham in the year 1780. "He was entirely naked, with an iron collar about his neck having five long projecting spikes. His body both before and behind was covered with wounds. His belly and thighs were almost cut to pieces with running ulcers all over them; and a finger might have been laid in some of the weals. He could not sit down, because his hinder part was mortified and he could not lie down on account of the prongs of his collar. He supplicated the General for relief, for his master had said as he could not work neither should he eat."

And the people of Bridgetown did not rise up and slay that inhuman monster! It took a long while for the West Indian planter to understand that a slave had any rights.

Clarkson tells a tale of a master who wantonly cut the mouth of a child of six months old almost from ear to ear. Times were changing, and he was brought to task for it. But the idea of calling masters to account was entirely novel.

"Guilty," said the jury, "subject to the opinion of the Court if immoderate correction of a slave by his master be a crime indictable."

The Court decided it was indictable and fined him £1, 5s.!

And yet that judgment is a great advance upon the times when the negro, as Mr Francis said in Parliament, was without Government protection and subject to the mere caprice of men who were at once the parties, the judges, and the executioners. He instanced an overseer who, having thrown a negro into a copper of boiling cane-juice for a trifling offence, was punished merely by the loss of his place, and by being obliged to pay the value of the slave thus done to death. He told of another instance, a girl of fourteen who was dreadfully whipped for coming late to her work. She fell down motionless, and was then dragged along the ground by the legs to the hospital, where she died. The murderer, though tried, was acquitted by a jury of his peers, because it was impossible that a master could destroy his own property!

Here is a story told by Mr Pitt at the same time. A passer-by heard the piercing shrieks of a woman coming from an outhouse and determined to see what was going on. On looking in he saw a girl tied up to a beam by her wrists, she was entirely naked, and was swinging backwards and forwards while her owner was standing below her with a lighted torch in his hand, which he applied to all parts of her body!

On the other hand, Mr Edwards told a story to the Assembly of Jamaica, of how some risen slaves surrounded the house of their mistress, who was in bed with her newborn child beside her. Imagine the poor woman shrinking down amidst the pillows, and round the bed these black savages with wild bloodshot eyes and cruel, grasping hands. The very smell of their naked bodies, their rags

stained with blood and rum, would strike terror to her heart. They deliberated in their jargon how they could best put her to death in torment. But in the end one of them decided to keep her for his mistress. The vile broken patois they spoke made so much intelligible to her, and then snatching the child from her protecting arms they killed it with an axe before the poor mother's eyes.

We can sympathise with the man who felt that no torments were too great for savages such as these, and with others who were certain that a repetition of such atrocities must be guarded against at any cost.

And so by a law passed in the West Indies in 1722, "any Negro or other slave withdrawing himself from his master for the term of six months, or any slave who was absent and did not return within that time every such person should suffer death."

And coming back, of course, he might suffer a good deal. So that the unfortunate slave was ever between the devil and the deep sea. But slowly as we read the records, we can see the status of first the coloured man, and then the black man improving. In the beginning these Africans who up till the Abolition of the Slave Trade could speak but little English, and always spoke to each other in their own tongues, were simply dumb beasts of burden, necessary for the improvement of the colony, even as a certain number of horses and cattle and other stock were necessary. Always they were treated as inferior beings, even when they were desperately feared. Gossipy Lady Nugent talks of them as one would an intelligent, rather lovable dog or horse, and spares a little pity for their hard lot.

"The mill is turned by water," she writes about a visit to a sugar estate, "and the cane being put

in on one side, comes out in a moment on the other, quite like dry pith, so rapidly is all the juice expressed, passing between two cylinders turning round the contrary ways. You then see the juice running through a great gutter, which conveys it to the boiling house. There are always four negroes stuffing in the canes, while others are employed continually in bringing in great bundles of them. . . . At each cauldron in the boiling house was a man with a large skimmer upon a long pole, constantly stirring the sugar and throwing it from one cauldron to another. The man at the last cauldron called out continually to those below attending the fire to throw on more trash, etc., for if the heat relaxes in the least, all the sugar in the cauldron is spoiled. . . . I asked the overseer how often his people were relieved. He said every twelve hours; but how dreadful to think of their standing twelve hours over a boiling cauldron, and doing the same thing." (A woman before her time was Lady Nugent.) "And he owned to me that sometimes they did fall asleep and get their poor fingers into the mill; and he showed me a hatchet that was always ready to sever the whole limb, as the only means of saving the poor sufferer's life. I would not have a sugar estate for the whole world!"

This perhaps explains why in the slave books the slaves seem to be so often lame in a hand, or with only one hand. And yet there was no possibility of refusing the work. They must do it.

Lady Nugent pitied, Matthew Lewis tried to remedy, the evils. He was particularly kindly, and was hated by the planters as making dangerous innovations in the management of an estate, and allowing much more latitude than others were inclined to think wise. They probably said he had not to

live in the island; he would go back to England and allow them to reap what he had sown. But he certainly reaped for a time himself; his overseers could get no work done, and on one occasion after his arrival the women refused to carry away the trash, "one of the easiest tasks that could be set. In consequence the mill was obliged to be stopped; and when the driver on that station insisted on their doing their duty, a little fierce young devil of a lass, Whaunica, flew at his throat and endeavoured to strangle him."

And again we find him writing: "Another morning with the mill stopped, no liquor in the boiling house, and no work done." The whole estate was suffering from a bad attack of what the negroes call "bad manners," that is ingratitude, for if ever a man tried to help them, Lewis did.

"My agent declares," he goes on, "that they never conducted so ill before; that they worked cheerfully and properly till my arrival, but now they think that I shall protect them against all punishment, and have made regularly ten hogsheads of sugar less than they did before my coming upon the estate."

He appears to have been a man of means, and in that he was an exception. I am sure that nearly all the planters felt they needed every penny their estates would produce, many were already deeply dipped, and few and far between were those who could afford to try experiments in the cause of right. But Lewis persevered, and I am glad to think that in the end he was no loser, his negroes worked, and his estates did pay.

He actually on one occasion dismissed a book-keeper for having ill-treated a negro, and took the evidence of four negroes against the denial of the

accused—and this in a time when a negro's evidence was inadmissible!

"I immediately discharged the book-keeper, who contented himself with simply denying the blow having been given by him; but I told him that I could not possibly allow his single unsupported denial to outweigh concordant witnesses to the assertation: and if he grounded his claim to being believed merely upon his having a white skin, on Cornwall estate at least that claim would not be admitted; and that as the fact was clearly established nothing should induce me to retain him upon my property except his finding some means of appeasing the injured negro, and prevailing on him to intercede on his behalf."

How dared he! In Jamaica!

"This was a humiliation to which he could not bring himself to stoop; and accordingly the man has left the estate. I was kept awake the greater part of the night by the songs and rejoicings of the negroes at their triumph over the offending book-keeper." And this man had only sluiced a slave with dirty water, called him a rascal, and knocked him down with a broom because he did not clear away some spilled water fast enough! No wonder the planters felt this newcomer was attempting dangerous innovations.

"It is extraordinary," writes Lady Nugent, more than ten years earlier, "to witness the immediate effect that the climate" (always the climate) "and habit of living in this country have upon the minds and manners of Europeans, particularly the lower orders. In the upper ranks they become indolent and inactive, regardless of everything but eating and drinking and indulging themselves, are almost entirely under the dominion of their mulatto favourites. In

the lower orders they are the same, with the addition of conceit and tyranny, considering the negroes as creatures formed entirely to administer to their ease, and to be subject to their caprice, and I have found much difficulty to persuade those great people and superior beings, our white domestics, that the blacks are human beings or have souls. I allude more particularly to our German and our other upper men servants."

I am afraid there were a good many people like Lady Nugent's German and other upper men servants.

But Lewis himself had very clear ideas as to the sort of people he was trying to help. He knew you could not expect either saints or wise men from men brought up as they had been, though the life might occasionally evolve a philosopher.

"To do the negroes justice," he writes, "it is a doubt whether they are the greatest thieves or liars, and the quantity of sugar which they purloin during the crop and dispose of at the Bay is enormous."

And he tells another lovely story of how he was taken in and his kindness imposed upon. There was a black watchman, old and sick, to whom he regularly sent soup, and then he discovered that the old scamp had hired a girl, and had a child by her, and for this accommodation he paid £30 a year to a brown man in the mountains!

"I hope this fact will convince the African reporter," he writes, "that it is possible for some 'of these oppressed race of human beings,' 'of these our most unfortunate fellow-creatures,' to enjoy at least some of the blessings of civilised society. And I doubt whether even Mr Wilberforce himself, with all his benevolence, would not allow a negro to be quite rich enough, who can afford to pay £30 a year for the hire of a kept mistress."

A nice humour of his own has Lewis. He comes down to us pleasantly through the years. He gives us many little illuminating stories about the slaves and their ways. Already there were growing up among them many little differences. For instance, a pure bred negro might not aspire to the hand of a lady with some of the blood of the ruling class in her veins. One day he asked Cubina, his body-servant, the nice boy whom he had first met on his arrival, why he did not marry Mary Wiggins, a most beautiful brown girl, and they can be beautiful.

"Oh, massa," said Cubina, shocked, "him sambo!"—that is, the child of a mulatto and a negro. But this did not always hold good.

He tells another story of a slave of his named Nicholas, a mulatto. Nicholas was the son of a white man, who on his deathbed charged his nephew and heir to purchase the freedom of this natural child. The nephew promised, and Matthew Lewis the master had agreed. Nothing was wanting except to find a substitute. But a substitute, once the slave trade had stopped, was very difficult to find. Before he was found, the nephew had broken his neck, and his estate had gone to a distant heir. Poor Nicholas's freedom was once more put off. Lewis says he liked the man so much he was strongly tempted to set him at liberty at once.

"But," he adds very naturally, "if I began that way there would be no stopping."

"Another," says Lewis, "was building a house for a superannuated wife—for they have so much decency to call their tender attachments by a conjugal name." Which is merely to say that even the mulattoes continued African customs here in Jamaica.

There was a law against slaves holding stock of

any sort, and of course at first they did not, but gradually men who had to go out into the wilder parts of the mountains to grow their provisions, acquired live stock as well, and they held it not only on Lewis's estate, but on other men's. Lewis bought all the cattle which the industrious ones bred, good, bad, and indifferent, at an all-round price of £15 a head, and he never charged them for pasturage. Truly patriarchal in his rule was he. He believed that the slaves, taken all in all, had a fairly good time, and he was a man of letters, a man who had travelled, and whose opinion is worth considering.

"As far as I can judge," he writes in the inflated style of the time of George III. of blessed memory, "if I were now standing on the banks of Lethe with a goblet of the waters of oblivion in my hand and were asked whether I chose to enter life as an English labourer or a Jamaican negro, I should have no hesitation in preferring the latter." Doubtless he was quite right. His saying it only proves to me what a ghastly time the English labourer must have had at the beginning of the last century.

There is another aspect of slavery that we don't often realise, but he brings it before us clearly. At the present day if we wish to get rid of a bad servant, or even one we dislike, all we have to do is to pay him and dismiss him, and we are quit of him and his evil ways; but it wasn't so easy to get rid of a slave. He had a man named Adam, a Creole, who had a bad reputation as an Obeah man.

"There is no doubt of his having infused poison into the water-jars through spite against the late superintendent. He is unfortunately clever and plausible, and I am told that the mischief that he has already done by working upon the folly and superstition of his fellows is incalculable. Yet I

cannot get rid of him. The law will not suffer any negro to be shipped off the island until he shall have been convicted of felony at the session. I cannot sell him, for nobody would buy him, nor even accept him if I would offer them so dangerous a present. If he were to go away the law would seize him and bring him back to me, and I should be obliged to pay heavily for his retaking and his maintenance in the workhouse. In short, I know not what to do with him."

The habit of murdering the superintendents and "bushas" who had done them an injury, sometimes a very trivial injury, was one that had always to be taken into account, and a negro who had no personal grudge against the doomed man could always be relied upon to help a friend. Such were the strained relations between the white and black. A Mr Dunbar was set upon and murdered by his driver, helped by two young men who barely knew the planter by sight, and they could have had no possible grudge against him except that of colour. Again and again they had missed their chance by the merest accident, but one night as he was riding home from a dinner party at Montego Bay they rushed out from behind a clump of trees, pulled him down from his horse and clubbed him to death. No one suspected the driver, but a curious superstition gave him away. Naturally, all the houses of the slaves were searched, and in the driver's Mr Dunbar's watch and one of his ears was found. The watch might have been arrived at by barter, but the ear had been kept by the murderer from a negro belief that so long as the murderer possesses one of the ears of his victim he will never be haunted by his spectre.

It would be monotonous to put down the number

of murders I have come across in my search for old tales of Jamaica. A book-keeper was discovered in one of the cane-pieces of Cornwall with his skull fractured, but the murderer was never discovered; and innumerable were the book-keepers and overseers who were poisoned by the women they trusted. Often the woman who mixed the draught had no idea of its being poison. She received the ingredients from the Obeah man as a charm to "make her massa good to her," by which, says Lewis, "the negroes mean the compelling a person to give another everything for which that other may ask him."

It was always feud, feud, feud. Reading the slave books, we see how much of this bitterness must have been engendered. In crop time the slaves often had to labour all night, and frequently on Sundays they were in the cane-pieces instead of being allowed to go to their ground, and if they had not time to grow their provisions it is hardly likely these hard taskmasters made good the loss.

"Great evil arises," writes someone in the Rose Hall estate book, possibly the Attorney in charge, "to the Negroes and stock from carting canes at night. An Overseer who arranges his work with judgment will always have abundance of canes in the mill yard by commencing to carry early in the morning. It is therefore my desire that no canes are to be brought from the field after Sunset."

Judging by this book, sometimes the mills started after 7 P.M. on Sunday night and ran continuously till the following Saturday night or Sunday morning without intermission or rest for anyone, white or black. How bitter might be the black man thus worked remorselessly, even though the white man was himself driven by a higher power.

A study of the "Runaways" interspersed up and down the pages among the other entries shows us very clearly the position of the unfortunate slave, even though no word is said against him. Cæsar on Rose Hall ran away again and again, and we feel great pity for Cæsar because possibly he could not stand this appalling labour. He returned on the 6th July for the last time, and on the 21st of the same month among "Decrease of negroes" is a simple note "By Cæsar died." Poor Cæsar! What agonies did he suffer during that long, long fortnight.

I went to Rose Hall once, a great four-storied stone building, approached by flights of steps built on arches. Its empty window-places, from which the glass has long since gone, look out over the blue Caribbean, its floors, where they are not worm-eaten, are of the most gorgeous polished mahogany, and the walls of the principal rooms are panelled with the like beautiful polished wood. It is empty, forlorn, the glory has departed; it is haunted, they say, and there is a blood stain that will not wash out on the floor. Of Mrs Palmer, who owned it last, very unsavoury tales are told. She is said to have murdered more than one husband and lived with her own slaves, doing away with her paramour when she tired of him. No old planter in the whole island had a worse reputation than this woman, who was murdered as late as 1833 by a lover who saw his influence waning. Rose Hall was a "bad estate." It was notorious for the ill-treatment of its slaves. Underneath the Great House, reached by a flight of stone steps, are rooms dark and airless, where the unfortunates who in any way transgressed were caged. The walls are of heavy stone, and the only means by which air

and light are admitted are by narrow slits in those walls, and they only give into another underground room. It was a ghastly and horrible place in which to confine anyone, let alone these children of the sun. I said this to a friend who told me of another estate on which a cruel master, when any slave offended him, had him shut up in a room—a dungeon he called it—which looked through iron bars on his dining-room. And there he kept the offender without food, and rejoiced he should be within sight and smell of the lavish plenty of the planter's table. Like a barbarian of old, the cruel master took pleasure in the thought of another's suffering. The narrator went on to say that on one occasion a slave was so shut up and the master went away taking with him the keys, and as no one could get in the unfortunate starved to death. This may be perfectly true, for it seems to me there is no particular form of torture to which the slaves have not been subjected at one time or another; reading between the lines of the Rose Hall book, one of the latest slave books, you can see this. Never till I read up the annals of Jamaica did I so thoroughly realise the meaning of man's inhumanity to man, and I suppose the lot of the Jamaican slave was the lōt of slaves all the world over. But we must remember too that there were certain compensations.

As Lewis has shown, it was impossible in later times to get rid of an objectionable slave, and the slave when he was old and ill was by the kind master protected and cared for, and the women who had borne many children were exempt from all work. They were supposed to have no anxieties about the future, that should be their master's care. At its best, slavery supplied no stimulus to industry;

at its worst—well, no words are bad enough for slavery at its worst.

In the Worthy Park slave book there is frequent mention made of a slave always referred to as Creole Cuba's Cuffee, who seems to have been unmanageable. At any rate he was always in trouble, and at last he was sent to Spring Gardens, where were others also difficult to deal with. It was not till I read in Lewis's book the evil reputation of an estate called Spring Gardens, about that time, that I knew how dreadful was their fate. Lewis quotes the owner as the cruellest proprietor that ever disgraced Jamaica. It was his practice when a negro was sick unto death, to order him to be carried to a distant gully among the mountains on his estate, there to be cast out and left to die, and the "John Crows" would clear away his bones. He also instructed the men who carried the unfortunate to the gully to strip him before they left him, telling them to be careful not only to bring back his frock, but the very board on which he had been carried. On one occasion a poor creature while being removed, screamed out that he was not dead yet, and implored them not to leave him to perish in the gully. His master cared nothing and ordered the funeral to proceed, but the bearers were less hard hearted and they brought the sick man back secretly to the negro village and nursed him till he recovered, when he was smuggled off the estate to Kingston. Apparently he found means to support himself there for one day, his late master on turning a corner came face to face with the man whose bones he thought had long ago been picked clean by the "John Crows." He immediately seized him and claimed him as his slave, and ordered the men who were with him to drag him to his house. But the slave made one

more bid for freedom. He shrieked and cried out his woes, and I am glad to say that in Kingston the spirit of fair play held good. The crowd that gathered were so excited by the tale that Mr Bedward was glad to save himself from being torn to pieces, fled from Kingston, and never again dared to claim that slave risen from the dead.

Lewis tells too of a man who was tried in Kingston for cruel treatment of a sambo woman slave. She had no friends to support her cause, nor any other evidence to prove her assertions than the apparent truth of her statement, and the marks of having been branded in five different places. Her master was actually sentenced to six months imprisonment, and the slave was given her freedom as compensation for her sufferings.

Thus we see slowly through the years the position of the slave improving.

CHAPTER X

THE MAKING OF CHRISTIANS

THE feud that raged over the religious instruction of the negroes makes a curious piece of Jamaican history.

"The imported Africans were wild, savage and barbarous in the extreme; their untractable passions and ferocious temperament rendered severity necessary. They provoked the iron rule of harsh authority; and the earliest laws, constructed to restrain their unexampled atrocities, were rigid and inclement. They exhibited, in fact, such depravity of nature and deformity of mind as gave colour to the prevailing belief in a natural inferiority of intellect; so that the colonist conceived it to be a crime of no greater moral magnitude to kill a negro than to destroy a monkey; however rare their interest in them, as valuable property, rendered such a lamentable test of conscience."

Thus the Rev. George William Bridges on the negroes when their spiritual state was exercising the minds of all the religious teachers. This particular shepherd was wroth because he objected to the sectarians, that is Quakers, Methodists and Baptists, taking upon themselves any interest in the souls of the slaves. "The country already pays," he remarks, "near £40,000 per annum for their religious instruction."

I don't know if I shall be called libellous, but it does seem to me that the Church was decidedly slack in dispensing that instruction for which she was so highly paid. She administered religion in the impersonal and dignified manner that was her wont, and the slaves might be christened if they so desired. Of course they had to get their master's consent, for it was not likely the parson was going to do it for nothing, and at the end of the eighteenth century it cost four bits a head, that is about 2s. 6d. But the clergyman was sometimes open to a bargain, and would do the whole estate for a fixed sum—about half the usual cost per head. And sometimes a whole estate would clamour to be christened. Sometimes they did it as a safeguard against some feared Obeah man, and sometimes simply to have names like the buckra. After their new name they added that of their master for a surname, and reserved the old name for common use. And then came trouble for the overseer or book-keeper, for the new Christians while exceedingly proud of being Christians like the buckras, were apt to forget their new names, and were always teasing to be told them, for, of course, they were recorded in the estate book.

As late as the end of the eighteenth century no one bothered about the naming of the slaves, and we find them entered in the Worthy Park estate book as Villian and Mutton, Baddo, Woman and Whore, but towards the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth, when Lewis writes, we find that even the Rose Hall slaves, and Rose Hall slaves were backward, had been christened, most of them.

Hannibal, a Creole, that is a slave born in the island, aged 54, of good disposition, appears to have been content with his old slave name; but

Ulysses, of the same age, and also a Creole of good disposition, becomes Henry and adds Palmer because that was the name of his owner. Shemonth and Adonis, both Creoles of 42 and 39, make no change, perhaps the owner would not pay for their christening, neither does Aaron, an African of 44, though how they knew the age of an African unless he had been bought as a baby I do not know. Out of fifty male negroes nearly half changed their names, but some who did not were children, so perhaps they were christened in the ordinary way. The names they chose seem to have been singularly commonplace. Why should Adam, aged 6, become William Bennett? Or Othello, who was older, J. Fletcher? Why should Robert, a quadroon 3 years old, become Lawrence Low, and why should Isaac, 12, become simple J. James?

Out of sixty women and girls only six of mature age neglected to change their names. None of the older women are married, but some of the younger ones add their married names. Still, matrimony was not much in favour, either with slave or free. Lady Nugent, twenty years before this book was entered up, is always worrying about it.

"See Martin's daughter soon after breakfast. It is a sad thing to see this good, kind woman, in other respects so easy, on the subject of what a decent kind of woman in England would be ashamed of and shocked at. She told me of all her children by different fathers with the greatest *sangfroid.* The mother is quite looked up to at Port Royal, and yet her life has been most profligate as we should think at least in England."

And so, I suppose, these slave women who were entered in the book about twenty years after Lady Nugent left the island, Cecelia and Amelia and Maph

and Cowslip, who was christened Mary Paton, and May who became Hannah Palmer, never bothered about matrimony. What made Sussanah Johnston become Elizabeth Palmer I wonder, and why did Kate become Annie Brindley, and why was Frankie, who was only 32, and valued at £90, neither christened nor married? I don't know that Sabina isn't a prettier name than Eliza, but a Creole negro slave of a hundred years ago evidently didn't agree with me. Eve aged 9 became Ellen, and to change a negro Venus to Eliza Stennet is bathos indeed.

"Baptism," says Lewis, "was in high vogue, and whenever one of them told me a monstrous lie—and they told me whole dozens—he never failed to conclude his story by saying, 'Now, massa, you know I've been christened, and if you do not believe what I say I'm ready to buss the book to the truth of it.' I am assured that unless a negro has an interest in telling the truth, he always lies in order to keep his tongue in practice."

The question Lewis did not ask himself was whether a white man in like circumstances would have behaved any better.

It may be that the planters were—some of them—brutal men, but I know that had I lived in those times I should probably, like the planters, have regarded the ministers of the other denominations outside the Church of England as most offensively officious. The planters as was not unnatural regarded their slaves as their property, property for which they had paid very heavily, and even though they allowed them many privileges they desired it to be clearly understood that these were privileges given of their own goodwill, and by no means to be considered as rights. The Baptists and Methodists preached what the planters considered

sedition. Even tolerant Lewis forbade the Methodists on Cornwall and Hordly, though he allowed any other denomination to preach to the slaves, and much as I dislike the Church of England parson Bridges, I dislike still more the Rev. H. Bleby. He and his confrères must have been a most pernicious lot. Evidently on their own showing they were not men of education. They took the Bible as their guide, quoting it in season and out of season. This is of course not a crime, but even nowadays it grates on the average man. In those days the insistence that the negro was a man and a brother when his master declared him a chattel was extremely offensive.

Besides the doctrine of equality was considered dangerous. It was dangerous.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century the talk of freedom was in the air. It was the burning question of the day in Jamaica. The planters discussed it openly at their tables, so did the overseers and book-keepers, and the listening slaves waiting round the table carried all the gossip to the slave quarters, for then as now the black people went back to their quarters once the day's work was done. The tinder was more than dry when the spark fell.

The former revolts in Jamaica had frankly been outbreaks of savages, dimly conscious of wrong, trying to regain their freedom, but the revolt of 1831-32 was a revolt into which religion entered largely. The planters declared openly it was engineered by the Baptists, and the slaves themselves called it the "Baptist War" and the "Black Family War," the Baptists being styled in slave parlance the "Black Family."

Bleby discussing this last of the slave revolts

Photo] [*Valentine & Sons, Ltd., Dundee.*

MONTEGO BAY AND TOWN, JAMAICA.

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which raged through Hanover, Westmoreland, St James and Trelawny, declares it started because a certain Mr Grignon, the Attorney of Salt Springs near Montego Bay, going out there one day close to Christmas met a woman with a piece of sugar-cane in her hand—not a very desperate offence one would think—and concluding it had been stolen from Salt Springs—it probably had—not only punished her on the spot but took her back to the plantation and called upon the head driver to strip and flog her. She happened to be this man's wife, so he refused, and the second driver was called upon and he too refused, and all the people taking their cue from their headmen defended her. The Attorney could not get that woman flogged, and becoming alarmed at the attitude of the people he called out the constabulary to arrest the offenders. But the whole body of the slaves menaced the constables, and the principal offenders made their escape to the woods. And the woods round Montego Bay, woods that clothe all the hills that the Maroons held so long, are particularly suited for such guerilla warfare.

Kensington, a place high in the mountains, was the first place burned, and presently the night was lighted by properties burning in all directions. Down the steep hills from Kempshot, down through the dense jungle from Retirement, from Montpelier and from Salt Springs, came the white people flocking to Montego Bay. We can understand the consternation that prevailed in the town. We can imagine the unbridled delight of the slaves as Great House after Great House was abandoned and went up in flames. Those flames spelled to them freedom, and they were sure that the whole island was given over to them. It was not. And in this revolt there was a peculiar character that we

find in no other. Many of the slaves were partly civilised now. It was twenty years since any had been imported from Africa; many were acquiring a little property and had some small stake in the land, and must have felt the futility of the uprising. And on these the consequences of the revolt pressed heaviest. Which side were they to take? As plantation after plantation went up in flames, doubtless they were inclined to believe what the insurgent leaders told them, that the country—the country they loved, their country—had been abandoned by the white men. The position of the faithful slaves was difficult.

Bleby says, and a certain Mr Beaumont, who certainly was not prejudiced in favour of the slaves, says that many of them were more afraid of the insurgents than they were of the free inhabitants, and many were carried off by the insurgents and forced to accompany them.

But this did not save them once the whites got the upper hand. The planters put every slave in the same category and hanged ruthlessly, asking no questions, believing no assertions of innocence. They had been badly frightened, and they took vengeance like frightened men.

About the revolt Bleby gives us more information than perhaps he intended. He is delightful—unconsciously.

"Information reached the Commanding Officer," he says, "that it was the intention of the insurgents to attack and pillage the town; and as the number of men was inadequate to the purpose, he required all who were capable of bearing arms to enrol themselves for its defence" (it certainly seems to me a very natural desire on the part of the Commanding Officer), "myself, a Scotch missionary and a curate

included, the rector and another curate having already presented themselves as volunteers. I was far from yielding a cordial consent to this demand upon my services," how they must have loved him. "He gave promise that we should not be required to leave the town, and should only be called upon to act if the safety of the place should be menaced."

And now, listen to the sufferings of this noble gentleman. One day they were asked to go a little way into the country and to return in the evening, but when they had been gone some distance he found they had no intention of returning for several days. I can see the Commanding Officer smiling secretly over the discomfiture of his valuable recruit. Incredible as it seems, considering the country was in the throes of a slave revolt, with all its possible horrors, this gentleman can actually write that they were "harassed by journeys day after day amongst the woods and mountains, often riding for eight or ten hours in succession beneath a scorching sun, and sleeping without pillow, sheet or mat, or any other accommodation on the boarded or earthen floor of the house where we might happen to stop for the night."

Truly a very gallant gentleman! I quite feel for the pleasure the Commanding Officer must have got out of making him as uncomfortable as he possibly could. Doubtless he would have joyfully put him in the forefront of the battle had there been a battle, but there wasn't one.

After the first riotous outburst, when the whites were taken by surprise, there seems to have been no hope for the wretched slaves.

The militia was composed naturally of planters, the officers being in many instances men whose

property had been destroyed by the insurgents, and who regarded themselves as ruined or reduced to the verge of ruin by the revolted negroes. We cannot but agree with Bleby that these were the last men who should have tried them, but try them they did, and the reprisals were terrible. As in the old days the Romans in Sicily, if I remember rightly, crucified their rebellious slaves along the sea-shore, so these Jamaican planters hanged and shot the deluded people without finding out whether they were guilty or not. After six weeks of trials, one of the newspapers at Montego Bay gravely announced: "The executions during the week have been considerably diminished, being in number only fourteen."

They hanged them by twos and threes in the public market-place and left them hanging there till another lot were due, when they cut down the bodies and left them lying on the ground till the workhouse negroes came out with carts in the evening and took them away, to cast them into a pit dug for the purpose a little distance from the town.

When the tropical day drew swiftly to its ending, and the sun sank gorgeous into the sea, when the purple and gold changed to bands of seashell pink and delicate nile green, and the shadows swept up and the stars, gleaming crystals, came out in a sky of velvet, then for me those dead-and-gone slaves, trapped in a web of circumstance, rose from their graves and walked along the shore. Ignorant, toil-worn, insolent, cringing by turns, with all the vices of their unwilling servitude upon them, they cry to high heaven for vengeance. And avenged they have been, for surely Jamaica is the land of wasted opportunities.

There is an old house high on the hills above

Montego Bay. It is beautifully situated, looking away over the hills and over the lovely bay. It has two-foot thick stone walls built by slave labour, the pillars that uphold the verandah are of solid mahogany—painted white by some Goth—and the windows are heavily shuttered.

It is haunted, they say.

"Knock, knock, knock!" comes a sound against the shutters of one room every night, a passionately appealing knock that will not be stayed. Only some people can hear it, but when they do, it wrings their hearts, so importunate is it. One man I know of sitting there reading at night, used every prayer and exhortation he could think of to still that uneasy ghost—he was a priest of the Church of Rome—but it would not be stilled, and at last he—practical, middle-aged man as he was, fled away from the sound of it to some friends who lived the other side of the town, and refused ever to come back to that haunted house. Was it some unhappy woman begging and praying her master who had been her lover to intercede for her son caught in the slave revolt? Whoever it was prayed there, prayed in vain, and now sensitive souls hear the knock, knock, knock, "for God's sake have pity and help me!"

Oh, most of the houses of the old slave town could tell pitiful stories.

Bleby tells ghastly ones of what happened to the unfortunate slaves when the whites had recovered themselves and got the upper hand. In reading them, we must always remember that this is always the case when a handful of people holding a very much larger class by fear has been thoroughly frightened itself.

There was a negro named Bailey who had hidden his master's silver for safety in a cave, and after the

rebellion was over he took one of the women belonging to the estate and went to the cave to bring back to the house the property which he had hidden. He sent off the woman with a load upon her head, and remained behind to get out the rest. A company of militia came upon him thus engaged. They paid no heed to his explanations, and when the woman returned for another load he had been hanged as a man taken red-handed!

But the case that Bleby dilates upon is that of a negro named Henry Williams. Now Henry Williams appears to have been a very decent, respectable man, far advanced from the wild savage who was his progenitor. He was wickedly treated, but I do not think he was exactly the martyr Bleby makes out.

"He was a respected and useful class leader in the Wesleyan Society at Beechamville," says Bleby. Can't we imagine him? He was a driver when he wasn't in religion, a slave on Rural Retreat, and the adjoining estate belonged to our friend the Rev. George William Bridges. This was extremely unlucky for Henry, for evidently the attorney who managed Rural Retreat and Mr Bridges got talking together, and doubtless agreed on the unfortunately growing tendency of the slaves to think for themselves. More particularly did they object to this chapel-going, and the attorney of Rural Retreat instanced Henry as a particularly virulent specimen of the genus Black Baptist. They concocted a plan which holds them both up to contempt. The manager of Rural Retreat sent for Henry, and though he was not in the habit of going to any place of worship, told him that he was going to church at Mr Bridges' house and desired the attendance of all the slaves on Rural Retreat. None were to go to Bellemont chapel, which appears to have been the place they affected. But none

came to Mr Bridges' house save and except Henry. Even his wife and children had gone to Bellemont as usual. On his master asking him why he had not obeyed his order and brought the people to service, he answered meekly enough that the people were not under his direction on Sunday.

"But have I not told you," said his master, "that you and the people are not to go to Bellemont chapel preaching and praying? How dare you go when I tell you not and encourage the people to disobey my orders? I'll teach you to disobey my orders. You shall not go to Bellemont for nothing!"

And he actually sent the unfortunate man to the Rodney Hall Workhouse, the most dreaded workhouse in the whole island—this man who was a class leader and a man of standing among his own people—with his hands tied behind his back and in charge of other slaves like a common criminal, though they knew perfectly well that he would have gone and delivered himself up to receive what was coming to him.

"I have no mind," said his master, "that you should go there as a gentleman, as if you were going on your own business."

"Excessive labour, miserable diet, chains and the whip, soon brought down his strength," writes Bleby, and he goes on to tell at length of his suffering. His leg was so diseased that he could not put it to the ground, he had been thrashed till his back was one unspeakable sore, so pestiferous that the prisoners in the same cell complained that the stench proceeding from his wounds was too great to be endured. At last he was released. And I suppose for want of any other place to go to, made his way back to his own people.

And his master made him the text of his discourse to his slaves.

"Do you see that man," he said. "There is a man that wears as good a coat as I do, and can be trusted with anything about the property, but because he will go to that —— preaching place, you see what a tremendous punishment I have laid upon him; and if I will serve that man so, what won't I do to the rest of you if you disobey my orders and go to Bellemont chapel."

Undoubtedly Williams could have induced the people on the estate to go to church, and undoubtedly he encouraged them to disobey their master. It shows a great step upwards in the status of the slave, and it shows us clearly the cruelty of slavery. Why should not a man worship where he pleased? But it was for disobedience that Williams was punished. Bleby talks about him as we should of a saint and martyr. He may have been, but in the eyes of his master he was merely a very disobedient slave whom he had to break lest the disaffection spread.

Bleby is an amusing person, though he does not intend it. He finds in the end that all those who had ill-treated the slaves suffered punishment at the hands of God. Most of them were cut off in their prime, by accident or suicide, all but Mr Bridges the rector, who had his deserts in a different manner.

"One morning, having breakfasted on board a ship in the harbour with his four youthful and lovely daughters, who were but too fondly beloved, and several other ladies and gentlemen, the whole party went out for a short excursion in the ship's boats. While they were thus pleasurably engaged a squall arose, unobserved by the party in the boats, and swept suddenly across the bay ('beautiful Kingston Harbour'), when the boat containing the four

young ladies and two or three other persons was capsized, and the sisters all disappeared, to be seen no more. The agony of the bereaved parent while he gazed from the other boat upon the spot where his children had been swallowed up in a moment, may be more easily conceived than described. He was stricken to the dust. The towering pride which was characteristic of the man gave way when he thus felt the hand of God upon him."

It was men like Bleby who took the religious training of the slaves in hand. And they succeeded in gaining their confidence, not because they were the best people to have their minds and morals in charge, but for the very same reason that such Nonconformists succeeded in England. They saw how cruelly, heavily, the established rules pressed upon those in the lower social stratum, and they not only sympathised with them but promised reparation in another life.

Feeling ran very high in Jamaica in those times. The Colonial Church Union was formed, and the members behaved in a manner that would have been unseemly in a collection of drunken pugilists, let alone people declaring themselves supporters of the Established Church of the realm. Up and down the land they waged war against the "sectarians," they visited the houses of these preachers, and on more than one occasion tarred and feathered those they particularly disliked. On one occasion they even wreaked their wrath on Bleby himself. Now I do not think any man should be tarred and feathered, but if any man was going to be, I am really glad it was Bleby. There is something about his book which makes me—who would like to be an impartial historian—thoroughly dislike him. I can quite appreciate the effect he had upon his compeers.

The editor of the *Courant*, a paper which appears to have been published at Montego Bay, wrote: "The bills against the painters of parson B—— have all been thrown out, and the chapel razers have not been recognised; so they are all a party of ignoramuses! I have only to say for myself, that if a mad dog was passing my way, I would have no hesitation in shooting him; and if I found a furious animal on two legs teaching a parcel of poor ignorant beings to cut my —— or to fire my dwelling, my conscience would not trouble me one bit more for destroying him, than it would for the destruction of a mad dog."

There we have the feelings of the two classes in a nut-shell, as quoted by that pestilential person Bleby himself. The planters were very sure that the dissenters by their teaching were inciting the negroes to rebellion, and having read Bleby carefully, I can quite understand how the teaching of men like him undoubtedly widened the breach there must always have been between master and slave.

Most dissenters I fancy came under suspicion. There was a young man called Whiteley, a relation of the absentee proprietor of an estate called New Ground, who had been sent out by his relation with letters to the manager, and a suggestion that he should be given work on the estate. But what he saw there he did not like. He spoke openly of his dislike and incurred the displeasure of the St Ann's Colonial Church Union, and they sent him a deputation of two of their number, stating:—

"1st. That they had heard he had been leading the minds of the slaves astray by holding forth doctrines of a tendency to make them discontented with their present condition.

2ndly. That he was a Methodist.

3rdly. That they had a barrel of tar down on the bay to tar and feather him, as he well deserved, and that they would do so by G——!"

Now his offences appear very mild, and hardly deserve such drastic treatment, though I think the young man was a little smug.

Here are the offences:—

1st. He acknowledged he had written a letter to the Rev. Thomas Pinnock, a Wesleyan missionary, asking him to help him in getting other employment away from the estate. Surely quite the proper thing to do, since he did not like the way the estate was conducted.

2ndly. In a letter written to the attorney of New Ground, he had said, "The Lord reward you for the kindness you have shown me, and grant you in health and wealth long to live!"

I really can't see that that called for tar and feathers.

3rdly. That he had said to a slave who had opened a gate for him at a certain place, "The Lord bless you!"

4thly. That he had asked the drivers of the workhouse gang questions respecting the offences of negroes of that gang. And surely *that* was harmless enough.

5thly. That he had made private remarks about the manner in which he had seen Mr M'Lean the overseer treat the slaves.

Here one of the deputation, Dicken, who was overseer at Windsor, a neighbouring estate, told him that he had two negroes at that moment in the stocks; and added with a brutal oath, if he would come over in the morning he would let him see them properly flogged.

I wonder how many unfortunates got an extra

flogging, not because they deserved it, but just to show those who were bent on helping the negro that the other side, who were pledged to slavery and things as they were, defied them and all their works.

The last accusation the young man declared had not a particle of truth in it. He had never preached to 150 slaves at one time, though to all the other offences he pleaded guilty.

It shows how high party spirit ran, how the planting class objected to raising the status of the slave, when we find that these planters managed to get that dangerous young man banished the island before he had been there fourteen weeks. He was sowing the seeds of disaffection in a soil already ripe.

"These extracts," says Bleby, "show . . . the almost rabid hostility of the planters to everything, and to every person who had the most distant connection with the religious instruction of their slaves."

Again and again the Colonial Church Union shut up the chapels, razed them to the ground, and drove out and often tarred and feathered the preachers. Their very lives according to Bleby were in danger. At last these doings attracted the attention of the Governor, the Earl of Mulgrave, afterwards the Marquess of Normanby, and he took the strong measure of dismissing from his regiment Colonel Hilton of St Ann's Western Regiment, not exactly for being a member and leading spirit in the Colonial Church Union, but because he, the colonel of a regiment of militia, had dared to put his name to resolutions censuring the conduct of the Captain-General—the Earl of Mulgrave—upon a most important point of military discipline. "He

has no choice," wrote the Governor's secretary, "but to remove you from the command of the St Ann's Western Regiment; and I have therefore received his commands to notify you that your commission is accordingly cancelled." And the letter is addressed "James L. Hilton, Esq., St Ann's."

We can imagine the slap in the face this must have been to the planters. The Governor himself, who should have upheld the ruling classes in everything, actually ranging himself with dissenters, dissenting parsons and slaves! That is what James Hilton and men of his ilk doubtless said to each other over their rum punch, when a royal proclamation was issued declaring the Colonial Church Union to be an illegal association. But the Governor stuck to his point, a circular was addressed to the *custodes*, the chief magistrates of each parish, calling upon them to do their duty, and he expressed his determination to deprive those who continued to adhere to the Union of all appointments they might hold under the Crown; also declaring that neither actual violence towards missionaries, nor a repetition of illegal threats would be allowed to pass unpunished.

But the Colonial Church Union had many friends. I can quite see those planters meeting and cursing the foolishness of the Governor, who actually interfered on behalf of these unspeakable dissenting parsons. They said he could not possibly understand in what manner the chapel preachers upset the negroes. The man who took the command of the St Ann's Regiment in place of Mr Hilton, a Mr Hamilton Brown, at the first muster declared in emphatic language he was in entire agreement with their late colonel. He was sure that not only the regiment, but everyone in the island whose opinion was worth having would be with him.

He reckoned without his host.

"Lieut.-Col. Brown was on the ground at the head of his regiment," says Madden, writing of the Colonial Church Union—and Madden was one of the special magistrates sent out at the Abolition, a particularly fair and farseeing man, "when the Governor, Lord Mulgrave arrived. His Lordship addressed the regiment, and Lieut.-Col. Brown was ordered by him to sheath his sword and consider himself removed from the regiment. Upon his dismissal three-fourths of the regiment broke and quitted the ranks; some of the officers tore off their epaulets and trampled on them; the men were however re-collected in the ranks and marched past in review order under the command of the officer next in rank not, however, without every attempt, by persuasion and abuse alternately from the mutinous officers, to induce the men to refuse to perform their duty. A stone of large size was thrown at the Governor, which fortunately fell short of his person; the officer, however, who was charged with this disgraceful outrage denied having committed it, and no further investigation took place. Thus ended the memorable review at Huntly Pastures."

It was not only the officers of the St Ann's Regiment who were in agreement with the Colonial Church Union, for they say that actually eleven magistrates were dismissed before its power was broken.

I suppose they held the last redoubt in the cause of slavery. And Jamaica must have been rather an exciting place to live in while that last defence was held. The slave-holders were all the more bitter that their power was slipping from them, and it was some little time before the dissenting ministers

were allowed to preach as they wished and without interference. Some of the *custodes* had a hard time protecting them. Many of them asked for trouble.

A Mr Greenwood applied at the Quarter Sessions of the Parish of St Ann to take the oaths. The custos was S. M. Barrett, and there was a big assembly in the Courthouse, a large number of persons being connected with the former Church Union. No sooner did Mr Greenwood make his appearance in the Court than there was a loud uproar. These angry gentlemen vented their wrath upon him.

"Methodist parson among us!" they shouted. "Turn him out! Turn him out! We will have no Methodists here!" They were on their own ground. One magistrate shouted: "I protected one of the wretches before at the hazard of my life! I will not protect this one!" And Mr Hamilton Brown, his dismissal from his regiment still rankling, called upon the custos "to order Mr Greenwood out of the Courthouse forthwith! Forthwith!"

But the custos was made of sterner stuff. Though without sympathy for the preacher, he declared he was going to administer the law without respect of persons.

"So long as a doubt remained as to what law or laws were in force here affecting dissenters, I have allowed all the advantages of that uncertainty to popular prejudice; but now that it has been shown and decided that the Toleration Act is in force in this island, I am bound, it is imperative on me, to admit Mr Greenwood to qualify and take the oaths."

But his listeners would not believe him.

They shouted, "It has never been decided." In

fact they didn't like the Methodists, and finally, each one feeling the support of his fellows, it came to "We set the law at defiance!"

At the hazard of his own life that custos defended the parson of whom he disapproved highly, and finally, getting open the door of the room of the grand jury, he advised the minister to escape through the window, for he could no longer defend him!

I like this story. It must have been such a stirring scene. It is told by Bleby to illustrate the brutality of the planters. We of another age can look on with a smile, as elders smile at and enjoy the fallings out of children. The riot was brought to the notice of the Governor, who promptly ordered an investigation, which led to a prosecution of Messrs Brown and Rose, two of the principal leaders, a prosecution and a triumph; for the grand jury acquitted them I doubt not as planters who had upheld waning rights and were worthy of all the honour their fellows could give them. I expect they all thought things would be better in the future, and their sons would see their actions justified.

But things were nearing the end. The long, long martyrdom of slavery was drawing to a close. In a few short months came Abolition, and the slave was free to worship when and where he chose.

CHAPTER XI

THE FREEING OF THE SLAVE

The freeing of the slaves came in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Think of it, not ninety years ago! And a short time before Matthew Lewis wrote—

"The higher classes are in the utmost alarm at rumours of Wilberforce's intention to set the negroes entirely free; the next step to which would be in all probability a general massacre of the whites, and a second edition of the horrors of St Domingo."

It must have been with some misgivings then, that the great day dawned when the slaves were not exactly set free, but made apprentices for a short time to accustom them to this new-found freedom.

And the apprenticeship seems to have been a ghastly failure. It took away from the slave the protection of the well-meaning master who could not afford to spend lavishly upon property, to whose services in a very short time he would have no right, and it left him entirely at the mercy of the man who had no conscience, and who simply set out to get as much as he could out of the slave while he was in his power.

Even England was doubtful as to the effect of her step, and she sent out certain magistrates who were looked upon with suspicion by the planter, and only by definitely siding with the white man in all

disputes were they agreeable to the ruling classes. A Dr Madden is one of these, and his description of life in Jamaica is graphic, though when I read how he had to part with his little boy, whose life he dared not risk in so perilous a climate, and then of the long voyage to the other end of the earth, I see how far those ninety years have taken us.

Lady Nugent, writing about a quarter of a century before, was great on the deadly climate of Jamaica. She goes to Moneymusk, which then belonged to a widow, with whom were staying two other ladies, also widows. "Alas," writes Lady Nugent, "how often in this country do we see these unfortunate beings." (Mrs Sympson of Moneymusk doesn't seem to have deserved this epithet. The estate was managed by her, and apparently well managed.) "Women rarely lose their health, but men as rarely kept theirs." She doesn't put two and two together, though she is always referring to poor Jamaica as "this horrid country," "this deceitful, dreadful climate." Certainly the number of deaths among those around her, presumably her friends, was a little appalling. But considering that she herself called attention to the way the people ate—and drank—I don't know why she should have blamed the climate.

Things hadn't improved when Madden came on the scene nearly a generation later. The amount of drink a gentleman consumed at dinner was astonishing.

"Half a bottle of Madera or so," he writes sarcastically, "can never do a man any harm in a hot climate, and sangaree and brandy and water are all necessary to keep up his strength, for people of all countries are the best judges of the mode of living in their own climate."

This kindly magistrate took too much interest in the slave to have been quite acceptable to the planter of that day, who seems still to have regarded the negro as belonging to a lower order of creation and liked to feel that he—the negro—owed all benefits to the kindly indulgence of his master.

He attended on one occasion a Baptist chapel in Kingston where the minister was a negro of the name of Kellick—"A pious, well-behaved, honest man, who in point of intelligence and the application of scriptural knowledge to the ordinary duties of his calling and the business of life, might stand a comparison with many more highly favoured, by the advantages of their education and standing in society. I was first induced to attend this man's chapel from motives of curiosity, not unmixed I fear with feelings of contempt for its black parson; I confess after I had heard him for a short while expound the scriptures, and prescribe to his congregation (all of whom were negroes like himself) on their duties as Christian subjects and members of society, and then his earnest and humble petition to the Almighty for a blessing on his little flock, and the hymn which closed the service, in which the congregation joined in one loud but very far indeed from discordant strain, I felt, if the pomp and circumstance of religious worship were wanting here to enlist the senses on the side of devotion, there were motives in this place, and an influence in the ministry of this man (however he might have been called to it, or by what forms fitted for its duties) which were calculated to induce the white man who came to scoff to remain to pray."

This of a man who but quite recently must have risen from slavery. He received from the contributions of his congregation about £100 a year, which

it was understood was for the upkeep of the chapel as well. Madden thought it very little, but Madden is a nice man with large ideas, and I feel sure the Rev. Kellick was not only quite satisfied with what he received, but intensely proud of the position he held. As indeed he had every right to be. He had come a long, long way by a very thorny path.

Madden gives the usual account of the negroes. "Generally speaking, the negroes of the present day have all the vices of slaves. It cannot be denied that they are addicted to lying, prone to dissimulation, and inclined to dishonesty. . . ." Now what else I wonder did they expect of a slave. But he goes on to say that in the late rebellion—of 1831-32—"In no instance did the negro swerve from his fidelity to his comrades; in not a single instance was the name of the real author of that rebellion disclosed. I venture to intimate that even the rebellious negro has a sentiment of honour in his breast when he encounters death rather than betray one of his accomplices. I hazard an opinion that humanity has its impulses in his heart, when he shelters his fugitive countryman, and shares his last morsel of bread with him rather than turn the outlaw from his door, and save himself from the fearful consequences of harbouring a runaway."

It seems strange that ninety years ago it had to be explained to the civilised world that the negro was like other men, capable of great heights and abominable depths. That a little more than a hundred years ago, so great was the prejudice against colour that a man whose grandmother had been a negress was not allowed to be a constable, could not inherit property beyond the value of £1200 sterling, nor give evidence in criminal cases.

"It was the fashion," writes Madden, "to regard

him with jealousy and distrust, as a rebel in disguise, who was to be branded as such on all plausible occasions."

But though the laws might prevent a coloured man from inheriting money, they did not prevent his making it, and when he himself became a slave owner a very curious state of affairs arose. The danger of slave risings was always present, and the coloured planters like the white had to have on their estates "deficiency men," white men, one for every ten slaves. But so strong was the feeling on the question of colour that these men whom their necessities compelled to take service with the sons or grandsons of slaves, declined to sit at meat with them. The owner had to have a side table set for himself, while his white servants sat at the principal one.

And the coloured people came into existence so naturally.

At first, as we have seen, many of the planters for very good reasons never brought their wives to their estates. Then again, overseers, book-keepers, and other employees could not afford to marry; they came to the country, and there were many it was said at the beginning of the last century who might be in the country over a dozen years without ever speaking to a white woman. What more natural than that they should form alliances with the good-looking daughters of the slaves who were under them. Such connections were looked upon with approval by the owners and attorneys. A white man was always bothered to take a wife, at least so I gather from the perusal of old stories of Jamaica.

"Why massa no take him one wife like oder buckras? Dere is little Daphne would make him one good wife—dere is one Diana—dere is little Venus—dere is him Mary Magalene, an' dere is him Phœbe."

Sometimes it was the other way round and he couldn't get a wife, for if there was a prejudice against a man the word went forth in the slave quarters, and not a girl would look at him.

Very naturally being Christians did not affect this relationship. No white man would really marry a dark girl were she beautiful as the rising dawn. A white lover meant advancement in a coloured girl's world, and she in her turn often gained great influence over the man who had chosen her. Indeed the majority of these women were faithful, tender and loving. They were not always the wisest of housekeepers, I am afraid—how should they be—and the Great House so managed was apt to be dirty, untidy, wasteful, slatternly. Its mistress had never seen anything better, had seldom had a chance to train.

The position grew to be accepted as the best for a coloured girl, infinitely preferable to that of matrimony with one of her own shade. There was no loss of caste, indeed the girl gained by being associated with the white man. It came to be that the man would give a bond to pay down a certain sum upon his marrying or leaving the island to the girl he had chosen for his temporary mate, and it not infrequently happened that this sum was so great that he was virtually unable ever to leave her. They say that many a coloured man made such a bargain for his daughter.

But this was in the days when life was easier for the slave, when a coloured man had some rights, even though no white man would sit at meat with him or marry his daughter.

It was sometimes very hard on the children of such alliances. Madden gives a vivid account of a visit he paid to an estate that had belonged to an

uncle of his, and that had been mismanaged and gone to wrack and ruin.

"I arrived at the ruined works of Marly after a fatiguing ride of five hours in the wildest district of St Mary's Mountains," he writes. "The dwelling-house was situated on a mountain eminence" (they always are) "about two hundred feet above the works, the remains of a little garden that had probably been planted by the old proprietor was still visible on the only level spot in front of the house, a few fruit trees only remained, but it seemed from the place that had been enclosed, and was marked by a long line of scattered stones, the soil that was now covered with weeds had been formerly laid out in flower plots. In going from the ruined works to the house, I missed my road amidst the rank verdure which nearly obliterated every trace of a path; so that I traversed a considerable part of the property without meeting a human being. The negro huts at some distance from the house were all uninhabited; the roofs of them had tumbled in, and had the appearance of being long unoccupied. The negro boy who accompanied me was very anxious for me to return to Claremont, and said it was no good to walk about such a place, buckras all dead, niggers all dead too, no one lived there but duppies and Obeah men. It was certainly as suitable a place for such folk as one could well imagine. I proceeded, however, to the house and went through the ceremony of knocking at the door, but received no answer; the door was ajar and I took the liberty of walking into the house of my old uncle.

The room I entered was in keeping with the condition of the exterior, every plank in the naked room was crumbling to decay. I opened one of

the side doors, and, to my great surprise, I perceived two women as white as any inhabitants of any southern climates, and tolerably well clad, standing at an opposite window, evidently alarmed at my intrusion. I soon explained to them the nature of my visit, and requested permission to rest for a short time after my fatiguing journey. In a few minutes two other young females and a very old mulatto woman of a bright complexion made their appearance from an adjoining room, and what was my surprise at learning that the two youngest were the natural daughters of Mr Gordon, the person who purchased the property out of Chancery, the two others, the daughters of my uncle, Mr Theodosius Lyons, and the old woman their mother! The eldest of her daughters was about forty years of age, the other probably a year or two younger; and the resemblance of one of them to some members of my family was so striking that the moment her name was mentioned I had no difficulty in recognising her origin. The poor women were delighted to see a person who called himself a relation of their father; but with the feeling there was evidently a good deal of suspicion mingled as to the motives of my visit, and of apprehensions that I had come there for the purpose of taking possession of the property; and all I could say to remove this impression was certainly thrown away, on the old woman at least.

I do not wonder at it, for they had received nothing but bad treatment from those who ought to have been kind to them, as well as from strangers for nearly forty years since the death of their natural protector, who dying suddenly left them utterly unprovided for. They were left free, but that was all. One son, however, was not left

free; and that young man was sold with the rest of the movable property of the estate when it was sold in Chancery. The aged and infirm negroes were then left on the estate; but a few years ago these poor creatures who had grown old on the property and had expended the strength of their young days on its cultivation, and who imagined that they would have been allowed to have laid their bones where their friends and relatives were buried, were carried away by the creditors and actually sold for three or four dollars a head."

"Who," Madden asks, "in the face of such circumstances as these will tell me that slavery in these colonies was productive of no oppression in recent times, or was the occasion of no injustices?"

He dilates on the undoubted fact that many a West Indian proprietor could not be got to look upon Jamaica as his home. He wanted to get as much money as he could out of the estate, and then to retire to his native land. So all improvements were grudged, "The Great House fell into decay, the roads were left without any adequate repair, the plantation was cultivated for its present advantages and without regard for its prospective ones; and the system of labour exacted from the negroes was productive of circumstances, which the proprietor considered in combination with the other discomforts of his situation, were unsuitable to the condition of a woman of refinement accustomed to the enjoyments of English society."

He speaks very highly of the coloured mistresses; although he deplores such connections, and says: "They cannot be defended, but I think the victims of the state of things which led to them are more deserving of pity than of reproach. I do not remember to have heard of the fidelity of anyone

of these persons being called into question. In the periods of their prosperity they know their situation, and demean themselves accordingly. In their adversity, when death or pecuniary embarrassments deprive them of the protection they may have had for many years, their industry and frugality deserve the highest praise."

The 1st of August 1834, the day when the slaves passed from slavery to a position of apprenticeship, was looked forward to in Jamaica with dread on the part of the whites, and, says Madden, with extravagant hopes by the blacks. But it passed. The servile race made one little step upward, and not a single riot occurred in the island, "not a single man, woman or child was butchered to make a negro holiday." As a matter of fact, the negroes went to church.

"I visited three of the sectarian chapels on the 1st of August," says Madden, "during the morning, mid-day, and evening services; and I was greatly gratified at the pains that were taken to make the negroes sensible of the nature of the change that had taken place in their condition, and the great benefits they had to show their gratitude for, under Him Who had brought them out of bondage, to their benefactors both at home and in England, who expected of them to be good Christians, good citizens, and good servants."

He does indeed recall one little incident. A drunken sailor was tormented by some small black boys. They threw stones at him, and as he reeled after them they scampered away, shouting most lustily to each other.

"What for you run away? We all free now. Buckra can't catch we. Hurra for fuss of Augus! hi! hi! fuss of Augus! hurra for fuss of Augus!"

On that night, too, there was a grand ball given by the black and brown people, to which the General and his Staff were invited. "Miss Quashaba, belonging to Mr C., led off with Mr Cupid, belonging to Mr M., while Mrs Juno, belonging to Mr P., received the blacks and buckras."

It took a long while to shake off the shackles.

Besides, we must never forget there was a kindly side to slavery. Many of the white people took a great interest in their slaves, and at the slave balls many a slave girl was decked out in her mistress's jewels. Indeed, there was much competition among the ladies as to whose waiting-maid should make the best show.

They received instruction, too, these slaves, and sometimes the instruction given was extraordinary enough. Madden tells how on one occasion a girl was brought before him to give evidence against a fellow apprentice. He asked if she knew the nature of an oath, and her mistress was a little hurt that a girl of seventeen, who had been in her charge for so long, should be asked such a question. Nevertheless, he persisted in asking the question, and the girl replied, to the no small discomfiture of her mistress and the surprise of the crowded Court—"Massa, if me swear false my belly would burst, my face would be scratched, and my fingers would drop off!" And Madden dismissed the case for want of better testimony, though really, I think, if the girl feared such unpleasant things would happen to her if she lied, he might have trusted her to tell the truth. But that, I am aware, is a very modern view.

Slavery was abolished for good and all in 1838. The intention, when Madden came to the island, was to abolish it in 1840, but the apprenticeship

which was substituted seems to have been very unsatisfactory, and I have read books by Quaker and Baptist missionaries which are full of the suffering of the freed slaves under these conditions. Up till 1734 the owners had the right to punish their slaves by mutilation, which, of course, often meant death, but though it was abolished, there are many ways, as we have seen, of making the life of a slave unbearable. If the apprentice did not please his master he sent him to the nearest workhouse, and many are the ghastly tales of the tired men and women worked in the tread-mill. It takes a long, long while for mercy and pity and kindly friendliness to make its way.

Madden shows us too a side of slavery which I confess had not struck me.

"The law, as it now stands," he writes, "does permit the father to hold his own son in bondage, and the son to demand the wages of slavery from his own mother, and to claim the services of his own sister as his bondswoman. These horrors are not merely possible contingencies that may be heard of occasionally; they are actual occurrences, two of which came before me within the last three months.

A Jew of this town had a young mulatto man taken up for refusing to pay wages. It turned out that these wages were demanded from his own son, his child by one of his negro slaves. . . . I most reluctantly fixed for that obdurate father the wages of a son's slavery, but in amount the lowest sum I had ever ordered."

And it was not always the whites who were the unkind and grasping masters. A free black came before him on one occasion, claiming the services of a runaway slave and her four children.

She had been absent for many months, and in support of his claim the plaintiff adduced the fact that she was his sister, the daughter of his own mother, and that both mother and daughter had been bequeathed to him, and the mother had died in slavery. The astonished magistrate puts it on record that he could hardly believe his own ears. Only, unfortunately, there was no manner of doubt as to the legality of his claim.

But Madden was something of a Solomon. He told the woman she must prepare to go back, they were all slaves, or at least apprentices except the youngest, who was not six years of age, but he would defer giving his decision for a couple of days, so that as many of the coloured population of Kingston as possible might be afforded the opportunity of witnessing the event. The claimant in vain protested that he was quite willing to receive back his slaves without any such public ceremony, but the magistrate was adamant. He assured the claimant that no pains would be spared to give the decision in his favour all the solemnity which the utmost publicity could give it. There was such a buzz of approval in the Court that the master was in little doubt as to what would happen a couple of days later, so he said he thought of giving the woman her liberty, or at any rate allowing her to buy it at a very low rate, but the children he would have, and no price would induce him to relinquish his claim to them. The poor mother looked the picture of despair. He should have them, declared the just magistrate; it should be out of the power of any human being in Jamaica for the future to dispute his claim or to call in question the title by which he had held his own mother in slavery till the day of her death. The

Court was with the magistrate and against the black slave-holder, for at last he said in a low tone he would give his sister her freedom, and Madden promptly drew up the manumission paper. But when the black man read it over he refused to sign. Madden made a dramatic scene of it. He knew he had the sympathy of the Court for the woman.

"I was in the act of tearing up the document when the audible groans of his own people induced him again to take the paper. I allowed myself to be persuaded to let him have it—the paper was in his hand—humanity did not guide it but shame did—he signed the paper, and never was there a manumission performed with so bad a grace."

The man still claimed the children, but he had to deal with not only a very kindly man, but a very wise one, whose heart was full of pity for the poor mother, who evidently had no faith in the kindliness of her brother. The two little boys, mulattoes of seven and eight—the oldest the man had already—clung terrified to their mother, and the magistrate had them and the complainant placed before the bench "to prevent any sudden disappearance." Then, with the wisdom of the serpent, he began to praise this man's generosity, "to extol his humanity and to put his heart on the best of terms with itself," and finally he got the freedom of those two little children. Clever, kind, Dr Madden!

In contrast to this black man he tells the story of a Mr Anderson, from whom he desired to buy the freedom of a slave, an Arabic scholar, a man who had come from the hinterland of the Guinea Coast, from Timbuctoo, was well born, and had had such an education as that town afforded. Madden hoped to raise the money by public subscription,

for he could not afford it himself, for this was a very exceptional man, worth over £300.

"Say no more," said his master at once. The man had been a good servant to him—a faithful and a good negro—and he would take no money for him—he would give him his liberty!

"I pressed him to name any reasonable sum for his release but he positively refused to receive one farthing in the way of indemnity for the loss of that man's services!"

It is refreshing to read such a story.

How much slavery was liked we may judge from the fact that even now with freedom within a few years of them—six at the very most—many a slave was anxious to purchase his freedom from the apprenticeship system. He had to apply to the special justice, and he called upon the master to appoint a local magistrate, and the two magistrates meeting, named a third, who must also be a local magistrate, two for the master and one for the slave; and then according to the age, sex, health, and occupation of the slave in question they decided his value. The amount to be adjudicated was left entirely to the discretion of the magistrates without reference to any scale of valuation, and in some instances the valuation rose to £170 "a sum which no negro certainly has sold for for many a long year in Jamaica," says Madden.

As a rule, according to Madden, the value of a slave did not run so high. He says, in all eighty apprentices obtained their freedom before him either by valuation or by mutual agreement, and the average valuation was £25. It does not seem much for the services of a man, even if it were only for four years. In one instance, a tradesman was valued at £80, but as a rule the price ranged between

£16 and £35. Madden says he attended a great many slave sales, and has never seen a negro sell for more than £30.

When slaves were condemned to death for any offences, it was extraordinary the value their masters put upon them. At first £40 was considered ample indemnity, but it rose, till at last £180 sterling was asked from the public funds for indemnity for a slave condemned to death.

"This indemnity," says Madden, "ought to be abolished, it is a bonus on negro executions." And he cites a case in which an owner received £605 for his executed slaves, "however little he might have desired to have profited by such means, while for as many living negroes when the compensation is paid, he will receive from the British Government probably about £240."

Peace did not come with the apprenticeship. The planters seem to have resented it immensely, and feeling ran high. Their first act was to take from the negroes all those allowances and customary gratuities which were not literally specified in the new law. They were free—well, they should see what freedom was like.

Then after the 1st of August, according to Madden, there were various outrages committed not by the negroes but by the whites upon the blacks, and it was exceedingly hard to get a conviction.

"A planter," he writes, "has been indicted for shooting at an old woman, and after wounding her severely, discharging the second barrel at her, but fortunately without effect. The grand jury ignored the bill.

Another gentleman was indicted for an outrage on a sick negro woman. The grand jury ignored the bill.

Another planter was indicted for the murder of his negro by shooting him, and was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment.

Another gentleman, an overseer, was committed to jail a few weeks ago for the murder of a boy, by shooting at a number of negroes assembled in a hut in the act of singing hymns. He has not yet been tried, but from the exertions making for him I have no expectation he will be convicted.

Another gentleman was tried . . . for causing one of his negroes to be severely torn by dogs, for going without permission to bury his wife, who had been dead three days, and who had been refused sufficient time to prepare her coffin.

The strenuous exertions of the Chief Justice obtained a conviction. He was fined £100.

But in the majority of cases convictions are not to be expected."

How strangely it reads in these days.

Before he closes his book he goes on to analyse the price of slaves, and arrives at the conclusion that the average price of all the slaves that have been imported into the West Indies may be estimated at about £40 sterling.

All the sorrow, all the woe, all the long drawn-out suffering, and yet each individual for his life might be counted as worth £40 sterling!

. . . . . .

I have found no chronicler who describes the actual freeing in the same graphic way as Madden told us of the apprenticeship. I think we may be sorry for both sides.

We must pity the helpless black man who had been accustomed to guidance all his days, adrift in a land where he owned nothing, and had not the faintest idea either of the value of his services

or the cost of his own upkeep. We may pity the planters who had to work their estates with labour in such an uncomfortable state of unrest.

For five and twenty years a sort of ominous peace reigned. Neither the planters nor their whilom slaves were content. There seems to have been a sort of feeling among the whites which is best represented as—"Well, you've got your freedom! Now are you as well off as when as slaves we took care of you!" And very often I am afraid they took care their black helots should not be as well off.

Not that the coloured people did not advance. They did. But their advancement was a threat. In the streets of untidy Kingston the coloured and black people met and grumbled and discussed local politics at all the street corners, the very conventicles where they went to pray were hotbeds of discontent. It is no good saying they were ungrateful. They were not. They had rights, but it always takes a long time to make those who will suffer in the conferring of a great benefit understand that in spite of their discomfort that benefit the good of the greater number, must be conferred. I can quite understand the black people vaguely wanting the rights they did not understand, to land, to better pay, to education, and the white people saying—"What are we to do for service? These people are clods. They cannot appreciate such privileges. Why make a fuss about them?"

A planter would say—"That man!" in tones of scorn, "why, I remember him a little yellow piccaninny, the son of my black mammy, and there he is in a high collar and tall hat in the Assembly, laying down the law to his betters. Damned impudence! In my father's time his back would

soon have made acquaintance with the 'cat.' That would straighten him out!" And both coloured and white would be bitterer for the recollection.

I think there was a certain fear among the whites of the growing power among the blacks. A desire to keep the subject race in its place.

Naturally, most naturally. I am sure had I lived in those times I should have sided with them, for a black man, ignorant and aggrieved, and armed with a hoe or a machete can be a very unpleasant opponent.

The brooding discontent grew and grew, fomented, said the white people by men of the half-blood like George William Gordon, men of some standing and education, and at last on the 11th October 1865, at Morant Bay in the east of the island, the place where the people from Nevis had settled in the seventeenth century, the smouldering discontent burst into flame. The blacks rose, overwhelmed the volunteers by sheer numbers and slew not only all the white magistrates assembled in the Courthouse, but among them a black man who was much respected among the white people and had risen to be a magistrate.

The tale of rebellion seems always the same. The assailed have feared and feared, and yet when the moment comes, are taken by surprise. It was so now. Twenty-two civilians were killed, thirty-four wounded and nearly all the public buildings in Morant Bay were burnt down. Edward John Eyre was Governor of Jamaica at the time.

In Australia Eyre had been a great man. Wonderfully he had explored desolate lands; he was Protector to the Aborigines, and counted a man who was just to colour. But Jamaica broke him.

The whites fled before the blacks in the first rush, as it has ever been. There were women and children

crouching in the wet jungle at night, fearing for their lives, and because of those who feared, and those who were dead, the whites gathered themselves together, proclaimed martial law, and took ample—nay, bloody—vengeance. But martial law was not proclaimed in Kingston, and because it was not proclaimed there, Gordon, who had been born a slave, the son of his master, and had risen to a place in the Assembly, was taken out of Kingston, and after a hasty trial hanged by martial law as instigator of the rebellion on, it is said, very scanty evidence. Under that same law 439 coloured men suffered death—354 by sentence of the court-martial, and the others shot by those employed in putting down the rebellion, soldiers, sailors, and our old friends the Maroons. And after martial law ceased, 147 more were put to death, while everywhere negro houses went up in flames.

In truth they put down that rebellion with a heavy hand, for the white man feared the black, who outnumbered him fifty to one.

There was a storm over it in England. But it was all very well for the people there, safe in their easy-chairs, to judge those who had quenched the negro rebellion. Everyone of them would probably have been on the side of Eyre had they been in Jamaica in the month of October 1865. Many, doubtless, mourned Gordon, the champion of the black man, put to death on such insufficient evidence. His looks may belie him, but he does not look a philanthropist. All the white people on the island crowded to bid Eyre farewell when he and his family left Kingston, for they regarded the prompt measures he had taken as having saved the country from all the horrors of a black insurrection. And in speaking of "black" here I

mean simply mob rule, the condition of affairs that must needs prevail when the ignorant get the upper hand. Pity is forgotten, riot and flame and bloodshed prevail. And from this Eyre undoubtedly saved Jamaica.

Punch took his side and had a cartoon in which the shade of Palmerston reproaches Disraeli, and says that *he* would never have abandoned Eyre.

> "Ye savages thirsting for bloodshed and plunder,
> Ye miscreants burning for rapine and prey;
> By the fear of the lash and the gallows kept under
> Henceforth, who shall venture to stand in your way?
> Run riot, ravage, kill without pity,
> Let any man how he molest you beware;
> Beholding how hard the Jamaica Committee
> To ruin are trying to hunt gallant Eyre,"

wrote *Punch*, and it represents the feeling of a large section of the community, a section to which I know I should have belonged. *Punch* does not enter into the question as to why there should be "savages thirsting for bloodshed and plunder," and "miscreants burning for rapine and prey." Those were not the question of the moment. They are questions for all time.

We think now, we are all agreed, black and white, that there must be no bloodshed and plunder, and there must be no section of the community to whom such a state of things shall seem desirable.

CHAPTER XII

JAMAICA AS I SAW IT

Dorinda came home from church. She had on a neat, blue cotton dress, a snow-white handkerchief was wrapped round her head, her pretty black feet were bare, and her comely dark face stood clear cut in the evening light against the white wall of the house.

"What church do you belong to, Dorinda?"

"Baptist, missus." So she was one of the Black Family, the church that bravely tried first to teach the slaves.

"And have you been baptised?"

"No, missus. I'm an enquirer." It troubled her mistress a little that Dorinda often felt the strong need to "enquire" sometime, when the table should be laid or the silver cleaned.

But an "enquirer" exactly represents my attitude towards Jamaica. I'm an enquirer still, though I lived there for over eighteen months, and every day I learned something. Indeed, much to my surprise, I find I sometimes appear to know a great deal more than many of the people who have lived there all their lives. It reminds me of an American tourist I met once at the Myrtle Bank, Jamaica's principal hotel—"My dear," she said, "I've been a great traveller of late, and I'm just full up of information, mostly wrong."

Still, there are some things I can see for myself. They are forced upon me like a slap in the face. Kingston was a disappointment. It is a dust-heap, somewhat ill-kept; there is none of the lush luxuriance of the tropics one expects from its latitude. Out of Kingston—in it too for that matter—it is very difficult for those not blessed with a superfluity of this world's goods to live in Jamaica comfortably, simply and inexpensively; the mosquitoes are a nuisance, the ticks run them a very good second, and the post office facilities are the very worst in the world.

Having relieved my mind of my objections to the country, I may say I have found it a lovely land, its people as hospitable and kind as its post office is bad—which is saying a good deal—and I enjoyed my stay there so much that I wanted to settle there.

When I first landed, it struck me the country was black, and then I learned its nationality.

"What countrywoman are you, Frances?" I asked the lady who condescended to destroy my clothes under the pretence of washing them. Frances grinned all over her black face—well, not exactly black but mahogany red, with a skin so fine the greatest lady in the land might envy her.

"Me, missus, me British, missus." And British she and her like are for weal or woe. Strongly against their wills Britain forced her nationality upon their fathers, and now they are as loyal sons and daughters of the Empire as are to be found under the Union Jack. Woe be to Britain if she does not treat these her children well.

There came into the harbour at Kingston, the lovely harbour which is not half appreciated, a warship with the Stars and Stripes at her peak, and the black men in the streets and all along the harbour

shores looked on with the greatest interest. More than one man took off the ugly tourist cap with the deep peak which seems a speciality of Jamaica, and scratched his wool thoughtfully and then one was found to voice the thoughts of the rest.

"Ah!" said he, "but wait till *our Temeraire* comes along." It is I who emphasise the "our," not they. To them it seems quite natural. She is theirs. And truly I think this people have bought their nationality with their blood if ever people have. Kingston is full of these Britons.

At first I was inclined to grumble because the houses all seemed in need of paint, all looked dusty and untidy, and all wanted mending in places, all the gardens needed water, in fact, but for the saving grace of the Myrtle Bank Hotel, I should have damned Kingston utterly. But I took the Psalmist's advice and lifted my eyes to the hills, and I saw what a lovely world was this to which I had come. There was a harbour, a harbour that will hold a fleet, a great sheet of blue water sparkling in the sunshine, fringed all round with the riotous green of the tropics, and behind were the Blue Mountains, a glorious setting for man's untidy handiwork. There is range upon range of hills, their peaks clean-cut against the blue sky, with little cloudlets nestling in their folds, and dark blue shadows marking the deeper gullies. A splendid range of mountains they would be in any land, but here they are close, close so that any man may leave the hot and dusty street and may rest in their gullies, with the refreshing smell of damp earth and dewy vegetation in his nostrils.

This is a marked characteristic, one of the great charms of Jamaica. Nowhere in the world that I have been, have I found in a small area so many

points of vantage from which may be seen beautiful views. Again and again have I climbed—nay, usually a motor or a buggy carried me—to a hill-top or a hillside, and there stretching below me was the sea, the ever changing sea, while around were range after range of hills with the cloud shadows resting upon them. There are broad-leaved banana plantations on their slopes, the villages are embedded in mango and bread-fruit trees, the vivid green of sugar plantations is in the rich bottoms, a house here and there gives life to the scene, but the rugged rocks, crowned by tall trees, are the same Columbus saw. Here a symmetrical broad leaf stands out clear against the blue sky, every branch outlined, and here mahogany, mahoe, and the giant cotton tree, cedar and sweet-wood and a dozen other trees grow close together, close and tall, struggling up to the sunshine, marking by their stature and their girth the wealth of the soil that has given them birth.

Sometimes, often indeed, a tropical storm sweeps over these hills, for nowhere in the island is the rainfall less than 30 inches in the year, and in many places in the mountains that amount falls in a month, and anyone who has the temerity to be out in the downpour has a great broad banana leaf on his head and over the bundle he is carrying.

I have never seen a country that seemed so primeval and yet was so well populated, for we must admit that close on a million people in an island, a little larger than half the size of Wales, makes for fairly close habitation, and in the remoter corners far away from civilisation as distance goes in the island, there are everywhere small shacks where dwell the country folk. When the shacks are very far from the main road, I know that the

owner is an ill-used man, for the Jamaican peasant likes company. His idea of bliss is to have a house right on the road, where he can converse with all and sundry who pass by, and keep in touch with the life of the island. He would not give a "thank you" for permission to live in the empty Great House on the hill above.

And that is another curious condition of Jamaica, the number of Great Houses empty and going fast to decay. I have seen some, like "Stonehenge," just a heap of rubble, and others like the Hyde, that except for a day or two once every six weeks are entirely given over to the bats and the rats, and the other pests of Jamaica. Really quite a large number of the New Poor of England could be comfortably housed in the empty Great Houses of Jamaica. Well, perhaps that is a forgivable exaggeration. But Jamaica is like England, the majority of people cannot afford to live in her Great Houses built for the days when there were servants and slaves a-plenty, and there was no thought of modern improvements.

The Jamaican negro usually does not have his plantation round his home. As in the old slave days he has it at some distance away, often so far that he must needs stay there at night to guard it. The idea, I believe, is that he saves the land round his home for the time when his legs shall be too old to carry him to a great distance. Still, round the shack itself may often be seen the poles supporting the green vines of yams, and often there is a breadfruit tree, its leafy arms stretching out hospitably, its handsome leaves glimmering and glinting in the sunshine, and in the season when it is well grown its fruit will support a village. He probably also has a few bananas or plantains,

and there is sometimes a primitive mill, with a blindfolded mule going slowly round and round, crushing the cane for the coarse head sugar that the black man loves. There are some hens scratching happily, for there is plenty for a hen to eat, a goat or two is tethered on a patch of grass, for the children want milk, and there is a pig, the only animal the negro feels bound to feed. He grows yams and corn and cocos for his hog, but his poor mongrel dog is so starved as a rule (I have seen brilliant exceptions), it makes your heart ache.

When we lived at the Hyde, the mongrel dogs belonging to the "Busha" and some of the labourers were the plague of our lives. They were always ranging the place in search of scraps. On one occasion we did remonstrate as forcibly as we dared with a black man who owned an unfortunate starving puppy whose bones stood out of its skin, and the next day the poor brute arrived, starved as ever, with a bleeding stump where its tail should have been. On its heels came its angry master. And we were also angry.

"I dun all me can, missus," he explained. "He will come. Me cut off him tail an' burry him an' tie him on top. It sure ting him stay wid him tail but him bruck de 'tring."

Poor things! Poor things! The sufferings of the dogs and indeed of all animals in Jamaica at the hands of unthinking black men!

A self-contained establishment is the Jamaican shack. Sometimes it is built of wattle, as the huts to-day are built on the Gambia, whence came the Mandingo slaves, sometimes mud is daubed on the wattle, as it is on the Gold Coast, sometimes it is built of rough logs and it is thatched with palm leaves, or, as the family rises in the social scale, with

shingle. In it apparently dwell a large family, ranging from the old granny whose age no man knoweth, to the new-born baby of her great grand-daughter, a baby born into a new world where life I know will be easier for it and hold more advantages than it did for the old woman who sits nodding in the shade. Perhaps the hut belongs to her. It often seemed to me that the hut did belong to the women, even as they do in the country from which they came.

All the cultivator, man or woman, need buy is the scanty household furnishing, and a very limited supply of clothing for the elders and the younger children. The older boys and girls soon learn to provide for themselves. It is quite easy to live off the land, and if more money is wanted there is always a cattle pen or a sugar estate handy where wages can be earned. When the emancipation came, the angry planter declared he wanted no idle vagabonds upon his estate, and did his best to break up the old slave villages. Now as the manager of a sugar estate told me he likes to have his labour close, and he at least was encouraging the negroes once more to build upon his plantation. Not that the negro works very hard as yet. The hard-working toiler of the north would be surprised at the easy-going ways of these children of the sun. A man will work I am told four days a week, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, but he has his wages on Friday night, so he does no work on Saturday, it is market day. Sunday of course is a day of rest, everyone knows it would be wicked to work on Sunday, and Monday is banana day—the day when the bananas are taken down to the port. All the roads down from the mountains, the roads that those in authority have

decreed shall be as far as is possible without shade, are lined with people mostly women and girls bearing on their heads great bunches of green bananas, which are sold to the fruit companies or at their collecting depots about the country. A fruitful land! It strikes me forcibly, for I am fresh from reading the wails of the slave owners—"the negroes will not increase." Will any wild things kept in captivity increase? But put those same wild things in suitable environment. Miss Maxwell Hall has a story about this increase.

She interested herself to get a pen boy of hers into one of the contingents going to the war. He wanted to serve the Empire — his Empire. He was a stalwart young fellow, but enquiries had to be made about those dependent upon him. Then she found that he was the father of eleven children, five by one woman and six by two other women! They were all alive and there was every probability of more! He had already served the Empire so well that the Government felt he had better stay at home and see to the proper upbringing of the hostages he had given to fortune.

No wonder there are thronged roads, but there should be more cultivated patches. The cultivation should be like that of Provence, for this is a fruitful country, although people talk of its being so poor. Miss Maxwell Hall, that most capable young pen-keeper, says—"For years everyone has been engaged in taking money out of Jamaica. No one ever seems to have thought of putting money into the land, of working the country for itself." Exactly what Madden said ninety years before.

Does this explain the desolate looking towns set amidst such fertile lands? There are poor. I saw them every day, but why they are so poor

I do not know. All the civilised world is crying out for just such small products as the negro can supply, cold storage is the order of the day, why then are there any poor in Jamaica? Possibly a discreet knowledge of the growing powers of the soil is lacking, and also there is no doubt manual labour is despised.

With whip and chain the white man taught the black—drove the thought into him with the branding iron—that manual labour was a despicable thing, something only to be undertaken by those who could do no better, and we cannot undo that teaching in a few years. Indeed it is only in the last few years, only since the cruel war which has made us all so wise, that Britain herself learned the lesson.

I have always been keenly interested in openings for women, and inclined to be wrathful when other women talk as if matrimony were the only career for a woman. Of course matrimony is good for a woman, exactly as it is for a man, but I have always felt strongly that it is for the nation's good that every woman should go down into the arena and work for her living as a man does. If she marry—well—she will know better how to bring up her own sons and daughters, and if she do not marry—also well. She will have made a place for herself in the world, and can hold up her head as a valuable citizen.

Feeling this strongly, it is no wonder that one of the most interesting happenings of my stay in Jamaica was my coming upon Charlotte Maxwell Hall, a young woman who is entering upon a career I should have loved at her age. She is young, extremely good looking, if she will allow me to say so, charming, and, above all, she is strenuous and vivid with energy—indomitable. She is the Govern-

Photo by] [*C. Maxwell Hall.*

MANGO WALK, KEMPSHOT (see p. 169).

Photo by] [*C. Maxwell Hall.*

LOOKING UP AT KEMPSHOT.

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ment Meteorologist, and she is managing the cattle pen which her father bought forty years ago, long before she was born. She lives up at Kempshot, on top of the highest hill for miles round, which has one of the loveliest views in lovely Jamaica, and she is gradually working that 600 acres of rough hill country into a beautiful park, where the pastures are walled by stone walls as they are in Derbyshire or Northern China, walls built from the stones picked off the pastures, which must be put somewhere. She looks after her trees. She prunes; why should not shelter trees be kept beautifully, says she, and she takes every opportunity of planting trees from other lands. And as for her cattle, they are tended under her own eyes, and she wages unceasing war against that plague of Jamaica, the tick.

For the acquaintance—the friendship I think I may write now—of this young lady, I am indebted to my cook Malvina. We had left the Hyde and gone to live at Montego Bay, and the family wanted milk, wanted it rather badly, as Samuel Hyde Parsons, "young massa up at Hyde," was but a small person and milk is a precious commodity in Montego Bay. Many people got it out of a tin. We did at first. And Malvina suggested—"Why not missus writing to Miss Maxwell Hall? Miss Maxwell Hall kindly supplying."

I didn't know whether the lady would be "kindly supplying" or not, but I thought the offer of cash down might induce her to do so.

And my letter brought me a visit from a laughing girl in a motor, who said she did sell milk, rather to the horror of some of her relations who felt that the most she ought to do was to "oblige a few friends." She, finding her milk going to waste, had advanced a step further and did not

see why she should not oblige herself, and had set to work putting that milk-walk upon a business basis.

And there and then on the verandah looking out over the sea, we struck up a friendship based on my unbounded admiration for her and her work. Presently I was looking for a house without being able to find one that suited my needs, and she came to my rescue with an invitation to the three of us, myself, Eva and the baby, to go to Kempshot Pen.

And there I saw a side of life which gave me not only great hopes of Jamaica, but for all the tropical possessions of Britain. Here was a place run—by a woman, a young woman—and run frankly for gain and for the good of all the people surrounding it.

Charlotte Maxwell Hall is Jamaican born (of English parents) and she loves her home, and she is making a beginning of a new phase in that land. What she is doing to the surprise of her generation, the next generation will be keen on doing and they will regenerate Jamaica.

Not that there are not rich pens and well kept pens, but they are managed by men and they are much greater in extent.

Kempshot specially attracted me because it was run by a young woman of an age when many girls are thinking only of their amusement, run not only with the intention of getting every ounce of good out of the soil, but of putting back into that soil all the good that came out out of it. And the place where she earns her livelihood, the place where the slaves rose and ninety years ago drove Major Hall and his wife fleeing in the night down through the jungle for their very lives, bids fair to be a very jewel among homesteads, a model for all Jamaican homesteads. I only trust the loneliness of it will

not drive her away. And then, of course, with a woman, and an attractive one, there is always the danger that some man may persuade her to marry him and he will carry her off.

Oh, but some of those ladies Madden talks about, "accustomed to all the refinements of English society," would turn in their graves if they could see this their modern representative. She will be still in her youth when her years make her old enough to be the mother of the girls of his time. But then she arises long before dawn, she is riding or walking in boots and breeches, dogs at her heels, over the pen seeking with the eye of the master for defects as soon as the first glimmer of light comes over the mountains; she rests in the middle of the day, but her work is hardly done when the sun sinks gorgeously to rest behind the tree-topped hills in the west.

And she has her work cut out for her. For the negro, whether on her estate or, what is worse, on its borders, is intolerably wasteful of his property and other people's. For instance, she found on the land when it came into her hands two well-grown handsome trees which she discovered were mahogany trees. She hailed them with delight and gave them every attention. And then one day to her dismay she found her precious trees, trees nearly as old as herself, dying and past all hope, for some negro outside her boundaries had stripped the bark off them, because mahogany bark—and mahogany bark is difficult to get now in accessible places—makes the best floor stain! That is the sort of difficulty the man or woman who would do well by the country has to encounter in Jamaica. It takes the heart out of the worker. What was the good of storming and raging, the seventeen year old

mahogany trees were dead, because a negro wanted to earn without trouble a few pence in Montego Bay. Again and again going the rounds, Miss Maxwell Hall finds that the black people have ruthlessly cut down trees she is cherishing, cut them down for firewood, or to make shingles, or for a riding-whip or some other trifle.

In my experience the negro peasant makes a very wasteful agriculturist. Sir Hugh Clifford I see, speaking of the countries from which the forbears of the coloured Jamaican came, advocates that white men be not encouraged to settle in these lands, that they be left to the peasants.

I see what he means. He deprecates the arrival of the white man, who comes as a bird of passage, anxious to take all he can out of the land before retiring after a certain number of years to enjoy his spoils—a well-earned, peaceful old age he would call it, an old age beginning somewhere about forty—in the country of his birth.

The countries that go to make up the Empire should not be so treated. But I cannot think that the peasant on the soil is best left alone to work out his own salvation. He will work it out I suppose in time, but the cost will be heavy. I have watched the peasant in the Alpes Maritimes in France, I have seen the fishermen drawing their nets in the Italian Riviera, and I have seen the negro in Jamaica and West Africa, and I unhesitatingly say that the cost of that working out is very heavy indeed.

The fishermen complained bitterly—there are no more fish, only the little young ones, but they went on fishing relentlessly, taking every one, destroying those that were so small they fell through the fine meshes of the net on to the beach.

"Oh, they take all," said a man looking on who spoke a little French, and he laughed.

In Jamaica the peasant is a very wasteful, a ruinous agriculturist, the only thing he does not waste is his own health and energy. In West Africa the same accusation held good. The peasant ruthlessly burnt down the forest trees to make a place for his patch of food-stuffs, and when the land was worn out there he chose another spot and repeated the destruction. He does the same in Jamaica.

In France it is the other way. The country is carefully tilled. The hillsides that would be barren anywhere else are blooming gardens, but the working out bears cruelly on the individual, especially on the women. Look at the people, white people all, industrious, thrifty, admirable in many ways—and about as far advanced in civilisation as they were at the end of the eighteenth century! Their women are worn with toil, they are haggard and old, toothless crones, before they are thirty. All the joy and loveliness has gone out of their life. Up in the mountains they are devout enough, but they have no use for modern science, and as I saw them they are not as far advanced as many a negro I have met in Jamaica, even as the negroes are far behind the farmers of Australia and New Zealand.

Now I am sure that most people will agree with me that the capable business man—and in "man" I include the capable of both sexes—the man with modern knowledge and training, the farseeing man who will settle in a country and give it the best of his years, will educate and help the peasant to get the most out of the land and better his lot, who will bring up his children to follow in his footsteps, must be a boon in any land. The

ignorant peasant wastes; in France his labour and strength in archaic methods of labour and life, in Jamaica and West Africa he wastes the timber, he wastes the animals he has under him, he wastes the soil, the earth brings forth not one-tenth of what it might under more enlightened rule.

And I need not say what that increase would mean, not only to the peasant but to a great manufacturing country like Great Britain.

When I read about Garden Cities in England, and the necessity for women emigrating, I am full of wonder why someone with a little money does not start an agricultural colony in Jamaica. I can see no reason why the beautiful land should become the exclusive property of the rich fleeing from the northern winter. It should be an ideal place for people who are not rich, especially for women. Here is eternal summer, here are beautiful surroundings, here is a fertile soil crying out for cultivation, here is a large peasant population waiting for employment, here is an ample fruit supply, here should be milk and eggs and chickens in abundance; here is no need of fires and furs, of winter clothing, of carpets and curtains, of heavy bedding.

If a woman go to Canada or Australia she must use her hands—it will do her no harm, but many women do not like the prospect—but in Jamaica for many a long day to come there will be labour in plenty crying out for a guiding hand. All it seems to me that is required to make such settlements a great success is a little money—you cannot have land and plan to work it for nothing anywhere—a little common sense, and they would be a boon not only to Jamaica but to the Empire. Only one thing, two things, perhaps, I would insist on. All the windows must be built as are those in the south

of France and in Italy—like doors that open wide and let in an abundance of air, and not as they make them in Jamaica, sash fashion, after the custom of cold England. And no settler must live in a mosquito-proof room. He must clear away the mosquitoes.

They talk about the Jamaican negro as dishonest, but I think that is to be attributed to ignorance, and will mend with better wages and better education. My servants, low as were their wages, might have been trusted as a rule with my money or my jewellery or even my clothes, and they only pilfered the flour and sugar and such like commodities which, considering they fed themselves and these things were dear, was putting their sins on a par with that of the boy who steals sugar or apples; but there is a form of larceny in Jamaica which is very crippling to industry, and which I have not heard of in any other land. The Jamaican peasant cannot for the life of him help predial larceny, that is field larceny. He steals not only from the well-to-do man with a large acreage, but from his neighbour and his friend. Before the yams are ready for digging, or the corn ready to be cut, comes along the predial thief and relieves the owner of a large portion of his crop. Whenever any man plants he must put in enough to supply the greedy robber, who is too lazy to plant for himself. Everyone expects part of his crop to be taken. It is the curse of the country.

"Missus," said a black boy to Miss Maxwell Hall, "you buy my corn when him ripe?"

"Have you any corn, Cyril?" He rejoiced in that high-sounding name.

"Got good big plot, missus. Him ripe soon."

"Very well," she said good-naturedly, anxious to help on the industrious, and passing over the

fact that he had calmly taken her land without paying any rent. So the time went on and the fowls wanted food.

"Where's that corn, Cyril?"

"Oh, missus!" sighed Cyril, sad, but not surprised, "somebody tief him all."

And his was the common lot.

Near one of the big towns there was a man who, having a crop of roots from which he expected great things, took the trouble to sit up and watch by night with a shot-gun in his hand. He concealed himself, of course, and in the uncertain light of the early morning he saw a big figure stooping over his precious roots, and, aiming low, let fly. The dark figure scuffled away promptly, and the owner of the land was satisfied, because when the daylight came he found blood on the ground.

"Now," he said to himself, "when I hear some man got sick in de laigs den I know who tief my yams."

For a day or two nothing happened, and then it began to be rumoured that a well-known man, a man in quite a decent position in the community, had a curious swelling in his legs.

"No can put foot to groun'," and the owner of the yams smiled.

The sick man went to the hospital at last, though he stood off as long as he could, and those inconsiderate doctors, instead of applying the proper remedies, insisted upon enquiring into the cause of the trouble, which he felt was no business of theirs.

"What were you doing?" asked the inquisitive leeches.

"Cuttin' bush," said the patient ruefully, "an' me fall backwards into makra with bad thorn," and further investigation revealed the fact that at the

bottom of every makra thorn wound there was a large pellet such as would come out of a shot-gun!

But the patient insisted he had not been shot. He didn't want to be arrested for larceny! But everybody about the place then knew that this well-to-do man had paid a night visit to his poorer neighbour's yam patch!

What the remedy for this evil is going to be I don't know. Of course everyone must see the cause. The curse of slavery that hung over the land for 250 years destroys every shred of self-respect. I put it to you, can a slave have any self-respect, a man who is not responsible for his own doings. He took everything he could get, honestly or dishonestly, he was fraudulently held himself, what did it matter to him whose property he took so long as he kept his back from the lash. And a standard of life that has been inculcated for so long is not likely to be altered in three generations, especially when for the greater part of that time these people have been most distressingly poor.

I like the black man of Jamaica. No one can help liking him, and still more do I like the black woman, with her smiling face and her strong desire to please. But even in this strong desire to please I trace the mark of that cruel bondage that held the people for so long. Ask a peasant man or woman a simple question, how far, for instance, is a certain place, and he will not tell you the truth, though he may have walked the distance every day of his life, and if he does not know it in terms of miles, has a very good idea of how long it will take you to reach it, and could tell you if he pleased. But no, he tries to find out how far you wish it to be, and that distance it is. Ask about the weather,

and if you show you wish for rain your peasant predicts rain, even as he is sure it is going to be fine if you want fine weather. Still at heart he is a slave, dependent in a measure on the kindliness of those above him for all he wants.

But dishonesty is not inborn in the Jamaican peasant. At the Myrtle Bank Hotel, where the servants are not only well paid but get good tips from the guests, the maids are so rigidly honest that the very pins and hairpins I dropped on the floor were picked up and placed on my dressing-table.

It was a significant fact. They were no longer slaves, they were self-respecting men and women—even as you or I. Their very tongue had altered. They spoke excellent English, spoke in soft and pleasant voices, to which it was a pleasure to listen. Most of the negroes have naturally pleasant tones, educated, they are delightful so long as the speaker does not think about himself and become pompous and bombastic.

They tell me there is no discontent among the well-paid employees of the United Fruit Company, that they do their work cheerfully and well, and I have seen for myself happy, honest, well-spoken house servants. I once stayed in a house, that of the Hon. A. Harrison, custos of Manchester. I was, unluckily, very ill, and was waited upon by a girl named Hilda, who spoke exactly like a highly-educated English lady. She had a charmingly modulated voice, and her words were well chosen, though she was a simple, barefooted girl in a cotton gown with a handkerchief on her head.

"How is it, Hilda, you speak so nicely?" I asked in wonder.

She showed a row of even milk-white teeth in a smile.

"I don't know, ma'am," she said. "Perhaps it is because I have lived with my mistress for thirteen years and learned to talk as she does."

This is what may be, but as a rule is not.

They tell a story of an inspector at a school examining the children in general knowledge.

"How many feet has a cat?" he asked smiling.

A row of black eyes looked at him stolidly.

He asked again, but still there was no dawning intelligence in those eyes. He began to wonder. Didn't they have cats in this place? Then the teacher stood up.

"How many foot puss hab got?"

And they answered as one.

I could wish that the schools were better equipped, for the negro patois, amusing as it is, is still but patois, and though negro voices can be soft and pleasant, often I have heard them talking among themselves with very ugly intonations indeed.

And yet it is a shame to complain, for though it is delightful to live amidst lovely scenery, it is always the people who add piquancy to life. And the Jamaican peasant was always adding to my joy. He didn't mean to do it. It was when he was most natural I got the best results.

On Kempshot Pen one day the head man came reporting that the men had—like men all over the world—struck for higher wages. But they chose the wrong time. Their mistress could do without them, and she did.

"Tell them," she said, "they can go. I can manage." And they set out to enjoy themselves. About an hour later she was aroused by a loud wailing, and in burst a man with his eyes starting out of his head and the lower part of his face a bloody pulp. She did not recognise one of her own men, and

he could only gug—gug—gug, and splutter blood and broken teeth. But there were two shamefaced men at the gate who looked as if they had broken all the commandments, and expected to be well beaten for it.

"It was Victor," they explained.

"Victor!"

Then they told the story. As they were on strike Victor had decided to go shooting. But his gun, an old muzzle-loading affair, declined to go off. He proceeded to investigate and blew down the barrel, while another man kindly applied a fire stick to the touch-hole. The matter was settled in half a second, and he received most of a charge of small shot in the lower part of his face. It looked horrible enough, but it wasn't as bad as it might have been, for either the powder was damp or he had been economical with it. But his wounds were far beyond all simple household skill, and his mistress could only pack him off on a donkey to the doctor in the town below.

An open-air life and a vegetable diet is apparently good for the healing of gun-shot wounds, for long before we expected him, Victor was back again, but slightly scarred and smiling. He was quite well, he explained, and had only lost "a toof or two." The doctor said he had taken away half his upper jaw, but as he didn't know he had an upper jaw that didn't trouble him.

Meanwhile at the time of the accident the head man had improved the occasion.

"See what happen to Victor when you no work," said he, and every man jack came back to work without a word about the extra money they had felt they could not do without, and worked so well that the surprised pen owner found she had three days' work done in one.

It seemed to me extraordinary, but she only laughed. She was accustomed to their superstitions working that way. Once she had contracted with a man named Maxwell to come and shoe her horses, to come always the moment he was sent for. He agreed readily enough, but the day a horse cast a shoe and she sent for him, he sent back word he was cutting bush and could not come. Well, she could not wait, so sent for another man, and just as he was finishing the job, into the yard came Maxwell with a bandage over his eye.

"Why, Maxwell, I thought you couldn't come."

"I come now, missus."

"But what's the matter with your eye?"

"Well, missus, a bit of bush, he jump up an' lick me in de eye."

That bit of bush had licked him to such a tune that all the lower eyelid had been torn away, and the dismayed girl could only apply boracic ointment as something harmless, and recommend his going down to a doctor at once. But before he went he assured her solemnly that she had only to send for him for the future, and on that instant he would come up, and up till now he has kept his word. He is afraid some evil thing will happen to him if he does not shoe the Kempshot horses the moment they require his services.

All over the country are dotted little churches, mostly Baptist, but true it is as Huxley—was it not—once said, "Man makes God in his own image."

The damsel, the new housemaid making my bed on the verandah, feelingly remarked upon how cold I must be. It is pleasantly cool towards morning, that is the most that can be said for it, but the real truth came out when Sam was brought outside to share in the delights of the starlit night.

"Poor little baby," sighed Leonie, "Oh, poor little baby. Missus not taking him outside?"

"Why not?"

"Oh, missus," in shocked tones, "bad for baby."

"But why?"

Long hesitation — and then out it came. "He small. Dey can kill him easy."

It was very startling. "Who will kill him?"

Much wriggling. She evidently didn't like to mention it, but she felt the case was desperate.

"Dem tings dat walk about at night."

"What things?"

We'd seen nothing larger than a mongoose. They may go about at night for all I know, they certainly tore about the grass in the daytime, but I really did not think by the hurried manner in which they declined our acquaintance they'd come very near.

She paused, wriggled again, rubbed first one foot against a neat brown leg and then the other, put her fingers half way down her throat and whispered as she rolled her eyes—

"De duppies."

No! One couldn't smile, she was so desperately in earnest, so really concerned for the sake of the little helpless baby. We older women might chance things, but she evidently felt it was playing it low down on the baby to expose him to such risks.

"Oh, duppies! There aren't any duppies."

"Yes, missus," and her eyes turned towards where, on the shores of the Caribbean, the Montego Bay dead lie resting, sleeping their long last sleep amidst coco-palms and gorgeous flamboyant trees. Oh, a lovely graveyard, and the sea breeze sweeps across it in the daytime, and by night comes whispering the scented wind from the hills. "Dey catch yous"—she

grew excited and slurred her words—"tear yous to pieces."

We are naturally brave. "Oh, Buffer will settle them." Buffer being the nearest approach to a bull terrier we could get in Jamaica, a powerful and handsome white dog.

Again she shook her head mournfully. "Dey tear him to pieces."

But in spite of all we slept outside and she shook her head mournfully, "Poor little baby!"

When the duppies did not take us the servants only considered for some reason or other the evil day was postponed. No one liked passing that graveyard a quarter of a mile away at night.

Indeed, this faith in evil spirits seems pretty general, even among people who are a shade higher in the social scale than a house servant.

When we were at the Hyde and Sam was very tiny, we used to put him in his cradle on the porch outside the front door, and leave him there to sleep in the fresh air.

To me one day came the "Busha" of the estate, a brown man, who naturally held a position of authority.

"Mrs Gaunt," he said uneasily, "the baby is alone."

"He's asleep."

"Yes, I see he's asleep. But Mrs Gaunt—we never leave a baby alone." Then he hesitated quite a long time and added, "it's dangerous."

I thought of what could possibly harm a sleeping baby. We were close against the mountains. Eagles? But there weren't any eagles, and I didn't expect they would swoop down at the house front if there were. Turkey buzzards? Yes, there were "John Crows." I'd even seen the birds of carrion on the verandah rails.

"Oh, the 'John Crows.' I never thought they'd hurt him."

"They won't. They won't touch anything alive. But, Mrs Gaunt," he sank his voice and spoke very slowly and impressively, "we never leave a baby alone. We believe that the spirits come and play with them and it's bad."

He was evidently afraid that as a white woman I would laugh at this, and he had only spoken out of the kindness of his heart, because the baby was in danger. But, of course, I did not laugh. Why should I laugh at faiths other than mine? And so encouraged, he told me of the spirits he had seen in broad daylight, spirits that clothed themselves as his friends, and only when he came up close did he perceive they were, as he put it, evil spirits.

Well, as a matter of fact, when he was not likely to be about we let Sam sleep on the porch, and outside he continued to sleep at night in spite of Leonie's protest, and so far as I can see neither duppy nor evil spirit ever did him the least harm, dear little man. In fact he continued to improve till he was the fine baby of the district, and I set it down to the fresh air in which he lived day and night. I am afraid I wickedly used the faith in duppies to my own advantage. Buffer hated a black man. At Montego Bay he used to sit outside the gate and kindly allow people to pass on the other side of the road, but if they came too near the territory he was guarding, he stepped out and held them up. If we heard a squeal we knew it was a woman, if a howl, a man, and flew to the rescue, but if they threw stones at him it almost took a motor car to shift him. He had a great reputation, and there was no predial

larceny round my house, chickens and eggs were quite safe. But the people were afraid of him, and when I went for a walk with Buffer peacefully trotting along by my side, for he wouldn't have dreamt of touching anybody away from his own ground, I was more than once met by a line of furious women with sticks uplifted.

"Kill! kill!" they shouted, and I thought of the old days when they would have killed a white woman if they could and not only her dog. It was really awe inspiring. I was afraid they would fling their sticks at Buffer, and then somebody would be hurt. And the men too threatened, "We kill dat dog!"

I thought they would do it too, do it in some cruel and lingering fashion, so I threatened in my turn. "If you touch that dog and hurt him so that he has to die, I warn you his duppy will haunt you, and I tell you the duppy of a big white dog is a much worse thing than the dog himself, for you will not be able to get rid of that!"

And I heard afterwards they said, "Missus go put him duppy on we." And I had a reputation as a duppy raiser, and Buffer survived till I could get him away to Kempshot Pen, where he had more range, and where his fighting qualities are much valued by his new mistress.

Still is the faith in Obeah strong in Jamaica. It is the ju-ju of the Coast, and all the historians have many tales to tell of its dread powers.

In the year 1780, the parish of Westmoreland was kept in a constant state of alarm by a runaway negro called Plato, who had established himself among the mountains and collected a troop of banditti, of which he was the chief. He robbed very often and murdered occasionally. This could

not be allowed, and at last Plato was taken and condemned to death. He told the magistrates who condemned him that his death would be revenged by a storm which would lay waste the whole island that year, and when his negro jailer was binding him to the stake—he was evidently burned to death according to the ruthless custom of the time—he told him he should not live long to triumph in his death, for that he had taken good care to Obeah him before quitting prison.

It certainly did happen, strangely enough, says Matthew Lewis, that before the year was over there was the most violent storm ever known in Jamaica, and as for that jailer, "his imagination was so forcibly struck by the threats of the dying man, that although every care was taken of him, the power of medicine exhausted, and even a voyage to America undertaken in hopes that a change of scene might change the course of his ideas, still from the moment of Plato's death he gradually pined and withered away before the completion of the twelvemonth."

Now that was written of 1780, but the very morning I wrote it, 7th March 1921 on Kempshot Pen, came a stalwart negro to see Miss Maxwell Hall, and to discuss local politics with her.

"And how is it," asked the young lady, "Daniel Cooper is such a bad man now? He won't work and he thieves."

"Missus," said the cultivator solemnly, "we sorry for him. Can't blame Daniel Cooper. Him can't help it. Him put so. When I go to Cuba him good boy"—the gentleman was over forty even then—"an' when I come back dat Charles Henry put him so. Dat bad man Charles Henry. Make him tief, make him lie, put him so."

So Daniel Cooper, idle scamp, for some unknown reason is to be pitied not blamed, because it is a well-known fact that Charles Henry is an Obeah man.

Obeah is a very real and live thing in the mountains round Montego Bay. But Miss Maxwell Hall has decreed that the gentleman who has been "put so," whether he is to be pitied or blamed, shall not come on her land. She will not encourage Obeah.

There was another case, a well-known case some years ago. A woman with two sons got leave to take up land on Kempshot. She put the boys to clear it, and as they worked a man came and said she could not have it. Her husband, who was dead, owed him twenty pounds, and he was taking the land instead. Everyone knew it was a lie, he never had twenty pounds to lend anybody. But as the boys worked he warned them.

"You come back after dinner, see what happen to you."

But they laughed and came back.

"You no come to-morrow," threatened the man, and sure enough next day both boys were ill, and while one died the other has been an idiot ever since.

Again, some years ago, a maid-servant refused the advances of a man she disliked. He threatened her.

"You no come to me I put you so."

But she laughed and tossed her head. And that night she was taken with terrible pains that threatened to crush the life out of her. The doctor was sent for, an English physician. He said he thought the girl had been poisoned, but the case baffled him. No remedy that he could think of had any effect, and he thought she must die.

Then came the cook to her master, her mistress happened to be away.

"Massa," said she, "Missus very fond of Gloriana."

He acquiesced. The girl was a favourite with his wife.

"Massa," pleaded the cook, "you send for Dr ——," naming a mulatto doctor, a Creole, who had taken his degree in America, "he can cure Gloriana."

Her master looked dubious. If the man with a good Edinburgh degree could do nothing, he had small faith in any other man. But the cook was determined. "Dr —— can cure." Therefore Dr —— was sent for. Sure enough, the new man looked at the girl, heard the story, went round the garden, gathered a leaf here and a leaf there, made a decoction which the girl drank, and presently she was well again. The Creole had lived in the island, and had grown up in the ways of the negroes.

But Obeah so used is certainly a very terrible thing, and not to be made light of or trifled with.

For the man of African descent, light-hearted and happy soul as he is, has another side to his character which must not be overlooked, and which has its influence on his life. Ever and again it peeps out.

One day Miss Maxwell Hall, riding among the hills, came upon, as she had done hundreds of times before, a pleasant little river which full to the brim, for the rains had been heavy, wandered along between plantations of sugar-cane. Presently she came to a gate, and as it had never occurred to her to do before, she opened it and rode in. The river widened, the hills closed in, and the trees grew denser, and she found herself riding along a dank, dark path overhung with rose-apple trees and mangoes, and as these trees do when it is very

damp, all the leaves were turning black and covered with mildew, the river ended in a dark pool underneath, a pool of deep, black water that poured itself away underground. The ground was sodden and wet, and reeking of decay. The air was heavy and contaminated, and the black leaves of the rose-apple trees shut out the light and were themselves apparently lifeless, or perhaps rather they were reeking with a sinister, evil life. Had she found a pool where witches met, or where the Obeah men wove their ghastly spells? Her very horse's hoof-beats were muffled in the foul and rotten vegetation underfoot.

She made her way back into the brilliant tropical sunshine, which was but a little way off. Leaning against the gate was a man idly chewing a bit of sugar-cane.

"What place is that?" she asked.

He looked up at her.

"It belongs to de church," he said.

"Belongs to the church!" she said. "Then, why on earth don't they clear away some of those mouldy old apple trees?"

"Huh!" said he, "dey likes it dat way. It be Baptism Hole!"

And so it was, the place used for one of the most important ceremonies of the Baptist church!

They fear still these people, I am afraid, some of them some unknown terrible power.

At Kempshot Pen there is an observatory built by the late Mr Maxwell Hall, who installed there a telescope, because he was an astronomer. Always his daughter used to help her father in his lifetime, and on one occasion there came to her no less a person than the schoolmaster from the nearest village, seeking information about the stars. She

gave him a couple of elementary books, and suggested that he should come up some evening and look through the telescope. He came, a black man, immaculately clad in a neat tweed suit, a high starched collar, a silken tie and—a machete was concealed under his arm up his coat.

His hostess was very much astonished, but she said nothing, only suggested he should look at the full moon through the telescope. He assented, spent an instructive evening, and then over rum and water and cake opened his heart.

There were two opinions in the village, he said, and he himself had not known which to believe. One was that the squire opened the roof, and putting up the long tube drew down the stars and examined them, the other that he went up through the tube to the stars and moon! Now he knew.

But, mark you, what a step upward it means that this man should come to enquire, even with a machete under his arm.

They say that the last census gave half the people of marriageable age in Jamaica as married, but had I not been told that, I should have thought with Lady Nugent that the Jamaican woman did not think much of matrimony. What she does want is a child, and a child she very often has, no matter what teachers and preachers may say to the contrary. Sometimes a couple, when they have got over the flush and restlessness of youth, will live together peaceably and happily, either married or unmarried, but the average Jamaican peasant girl—I do not say all, but many certainly—will often have a child before she settles down. As in Africa, it is motherhood that counts first.

I discussed the matter with Christy, who presided over the forlorn stone-paved cavern called a kitchen

when I first arrived in Jamaica. Christy was a wild-looking lady with her hair on end, bare feet of course, and a ragged skirt. She had been comely in her own way, but she was as dirty as she was unkempt, and decidedly as useless. She had, however, great dramatic powers and could tell a story. She had three children and she displayed them with pride.

No husband was in evidence, so I concluded rashly she was a widow.

"Oh no, missus. My husban' he get intelligence an' he leff me."

I didn't wonder at his leaving her. I was only surprised that he did not "get intelligence" before she had three children.

"I got 'nother chile," said she, as if fearing these three did not do her justice, "a white chile."

I wasn't accustomed to Jamaican ways then and I was startled. The three before me could hardly have been blacker.

"Him's fader white colonel," said she proudly, and she mentioned a well-known name in the island, "him's fader very good to me. Have him before I get married."

I suppose I looked a little surprised.

"Not do that in England?" asked Christy, seeking information, and I mendaciously assured her that every woman in that favoured land waited till she went to church and wore a ring before she had a child.

I was introduced to the white son later on, a great hulking mulatto with rather a sullen air, and I noticed that the son born out of wedlock was treated with great respect by the sister and brothers who in England would be counted the more fortunate. They all called him "massa." But he was good

to his wild-looking mother, and brought her and her family many presents. I was not surprised that she was very proud of the colonel's son.

Then came Rebekah, who took her place when we could stand Christy and her brood no longer.

Rebekah had a child, and was openly proud of him. We always discussed him when she kneaded the bread, and I stood over her to see that she did it, because if I had not, she would have considered that kneading as done.

"Missus looking lovely," said Rebekah, "in her pink dress." Missus' dress wasn't pink and she didn't look lovely, but I suppose Rebekah considered it a good way to open the morning. Perhaps if I felt she considered me lovely, I might ease up on the bread kneading. I never did, but she never failed to try. Then she told me about her "chile."

"Yes, missus, de fuss' chile I get he die."

"Ah, that was sad. And what was his name?"

"Him name Lily. Den I pray to the Lard an' He give me anoder."

"And your husband—" I began.

"Oh, missus, I get no husban'. He's fader, Amos Hussy, very good man he's fader, help me with de chile."

"A white man?" I asked, remembering Christy's colonel.

"Oh, missus!"—she stopped kneading—"if he white I be rich woman. He a cultivator. Very good man."

But Frances the laundry woman was franker still. She brought with her her son "Hedgar," aged eight, and she explained—

"Hedgar's fader very proud of him, tink most of Hedgar, more'n all his sons. He want me to leave him an' he keep him, but I say 'no.' Hedgar de

on'y chile I get, mus' keep him, an' I get no work in dat country."

That far country was about twelve miles off.

But the other sons were a little mystifying; however, she kindly explained, being a talkative soul.

"He get four sons by four women, all about de same age, but he tink most of Hedgar."

I really felt a little delicacy about pursuing enquiries any further, but Frances felt none. It was commonplace to her.

"He get married," she chortled, "an' his wife give him no chilluns!"

Frances let me in for sanctioning immorality with a vengeance. She had a room in which she and Edgar slept, and she kept herself while I paid her the magnificent sum of 7s. a week. Too little, I admit. But what was I to do? It was higher than the wages around, and she certainly wasn't worth what she got. Still she apparently felt no lack, for when I saw a strange girl about the place, I was informed it was Frances' cousin come to stay with her in the country for a change! And when the cousin was gone, seeing I said nothing, she came to me and told me that the man she was going to marry wanted to come and see her.

"An' he say, missus, he want to come like a man an' not hidin'. Say, 'ask missus, let him come."

I was struck with the nice feeling on the man's part, and cordially gave my permission, though I must say I was surprised at its being asked.

He came one night after I had gone to bed and next morning he was engaged in chopping wood for the cook. And then I found to my dismay that he and Frances and Edgar shared her room!

What was I to say? My leave had been asked. So I shut my eyes and said nothing, and the gentle-

man stayed a fortnight, and then sent in to know what present I was going to give him before he went away!

I suppose to the average stay-at-home middle-class English woman this state of things sounds shockingly immoral, but after all is it not that things are here done openly that in other places are done under the rose.

Up and down Jamaica have I been, and I can honestly say that the average Jamaican peasant woman looks happy. Nay, she looks more than happy, for happiness may be a passing condition, the majority of the Jamaican peasant women look entirely content. There is no unspoken longing in a peasant woman's face, she is quite satisfied.

"Missus," said Leonie persuasively, "me kindly begging you leff me sleep home." Now Leonie had sworn by all her gods that she would stay at her post all night, so enquiries were made and it was found "me cousin" was going to have a baby in six weeks, and as it was her first, very naturally she did not like being alone at night. But what about her husband? Oh, she hadn't a husband. Whatever made missus think that? The father? "Oh, he nice young man, he helping her a lot, but he too young, not worth marrying."

"Missus, kindly begging—" insinuatingly.

Well, of course, Leonie spent her nights with the expectant young mother, and everybody was satisfied.

The real trouble is that these poor little children thus brought into the world are often not properly looked after. How can a young woman keep herself and her child on 7s. a week, and that is more than the majority of them get? And so often it ends in a pitiful little white coffin with a forlorn little wreath

of fern upon it, carried on a man's shoulder to the graveyard. I have seen them often. There are no followers, though the Jamaican loves a funeral.

"Not worth while," said Malvina when I asked why no one went to the poor little baby's funeral.

Not that the women do not help each other. The fat, smiling cook at Kempshot who could make most excellent omelettes, had not only her own child to keep, but two of her dead sister's. She was not married, neither had the sister been. But will any of the virtuous venture to cast a stone! Who amongst us who pride ourselves upon our decent lives would do as much. But again the difficulty crops up. Those children will grow more and more expensive. How can she start them in the world?

Sometimes these children are "lent out." It is a curious custom in the country, the survival of the old slave days when there were numerous stable helpers and servants in the Great House, and a child was sent by his mother there and became the understudy of an understudy, and so learned about horses or gardening or housework. Now, of course, there are no white people whose houses are open in such fashion, but it is no uncommon thing for a child to be "lent out" by its mother to some small cultivator, either to do housework or to work in the fields for his or her food or clothes. The food is plain and, often like the clothes I am afraid, scanty.

Miss Maxwell Hall was called out one morning to interview a miserable-looking little boy, about as high as the table, who in a ragged shirt and pants stood in the chill of early morning at her gate, holding a still more miserable-looking little white dog on a string.

He had come to see missus, he said; he had waited all night to see her, waited in the cold and

wet, poor child, for it is cold in the hills to these people. His mammy had lent him out to Mr —— "over on the hill yander," and someone had given him the puppy, which he loved dearly. And every bone in that poor little dog was plainly visible, his master did not give the little boy much, but he provided nothing at all for the dog. So last night Mr —— had set his dinner down and gone out for a moment, and while he was away the little starving dog had wolfed the lot and then wisely run away and hidden in the bush. Upon the small owner fell the dinner-less man's wrath and he beat him, beat him with a board with nails in it, and he displayed to the horrified girl the marks of that castigation. Then he had fled away, recovered his dog and come to her for protection. Poor little "lent out" child!

But all masters and mistresses are not so cruel. Many are kindly enough and share what they have with their dependents. The trouble is that they are ignorant, they do not know how to make the most of the opportunities that are theirs.

When I lived at the Hyde among the hills in Trelawny, the people used to come down to the Great House to see us and sell us eggs and fruit—often I am afraid our own eggs and our own fruit—and they used to beg a little. Retinella, whom I knew had fowls, and who was I think honest, used to bring a dozen eggs for sale, and then produce a very tiny bottle.

"Missus, I kindly begging you a little scent, going to a wedding"—or a funeral. Both these entertainments required perfuming, and there were more of them I am sure than the population could possibly stand.

But they did not always beg and they did not always sell. Sometimes they would bring a few

heads of corn, a yam or a sour sop, and when payment was offered it would be, "Missus, I kindly giving it you. You give me things, you never let me give you things." So then we would accept gratefully, and cast about to see what return could be made without it being too patent that we were giving something for value received.

The town man likes to see himself in print, and not only the letters in the *Gleaner*, the principal Jamaican paper, but the advertisements show his sentiments.

I think the first thing that struck me was the many advertisements for straightening the hair. I am accustomed in these northern latitudes to see many prescriptions offering a permanent wave that no damp will affect, and I have seen not only women but young men with their hair carefully "Marcelled" with the curling tongs, so why I should be amused at the man who wants the kink taken out of his locks I do not know. There are certainly many men and women who do desire it.

But where the coloured man really spreads himself out is in the matrimonial advertisements. They are a constant source of delight.

Sometimes a lady wants to be married. Here is one who is beginning early—

"To Marry," the advertisement is headed. "A lady eighteen years of age wants a husband" (no beating about the bush, plain statement of fact); "must be from a respectable family. Fair or white preferred. Enclose photograph; please send name and address.—Apply Miss G., c/o *Gleaner*, Kingston."

"Bride Wanted," says another advertisement; but the gentleman who wants has an eye to the main chance. "To correspond with a lady of some

independent means with the view of marriage; any colour except white, must be good at sewing; March born preferred. — Apply 'Businessman,' Williamsfield P.O."

"Any colour except white" is, of course, sheer defiance.

But it is the advertisements of those who rather wish the knot had never been tied that are the most amusing.

"NOTICE.—My wife, Sophia Junor, having left my home from the 31st day of May in my sick bed, and up to this date having not returned, this is to warn the public that I do not hold myself responsible for any debt she might contract. Matthias Junor, Bath P.O., Knockands."

Very often the complaining man warns the public that he intends to marry again, as "I cannot manage myself." Sometimes he puts it in much more grandiloquent language.

"My wife, Mrs Henrietta Scott, has not been under my protection for the last twenty-one years, 1899 to 1920, and I am not aware of her existence outside of Jamaica. Unless I am put in possession of information as to whether she is living or not, I shall proceed to enter into contract of matrimony. Joseph Scott, Windward Road, Kingston, 12th July 1920."

On other occasions the lady has something to say on the subject.

"NOTICE.—I, Edith Phinn, hereby beg to notify the public that my chief cause to leave my husband was this: He has ill-treated me and threatened to shoot me with his revolver, and I am now residing

at my families residence, 50 Cumberland Road, Spanish Town."

I do like "my families residence."

And yet another indignant lady—

"NOTICE.—I beg to inform the public that I have not left the care and protection of my husband as stated by him" (I do regret that I missed his advertisement), "and furthermore all his real and personal belongings are for myself and his four children. We are living in his home, I never left it even for a day. So I therefore warn the public not to transact any business with him without my consent.—(Mrs) M. E. Sibblies, Lewis Store, Clonmel, P.O."

A lady who can take care of herself!

I suppose nobody quite realises what it is that appeals to a man in the woman he takes. Presumably there is usually some strong attraction, and yet there is a story told in Jamaica, a perfectly true story I believe, which makes me feel that some people are either easily satisfied or exceedingly accommodating.

There were brides and grooms and bridesmaids and ushers, and much excitement and confusion and giggling, but the parson went on gravely with the ceremony, trusting by his correct demeanour to bring these dark children of the church to a realisation of the solemnity of the sacrament in which they were taking part. But they would not calm down.

"I think—" he began severely, when the last words had been spoken, but an usher, who had been particularly objectionable, interrupted him, and he gave him the attention now he had denied him during the service.

"But sah, but minister," stammered the excited gentleman in a high collar, "you's married de wrong woman on to de wrong man!"

Now I, being a common-sense heathen, should have been tempted to say, like the clergyman officiating at Easter-time marriages in the Potteries, when ten or twelve couples are married at once, "Now, sort yourselves." It seems to me it is the intention that counts. But our clergyman was made of different stuff. He firmly believed he had bound indissolubly men and women who did not desire each other, and in much consternation he retired to his study and sat there with his head in his hands, wondering what on earth he should do.

Meanwhile, the wedding party also discussed the matter. And presently the much-troubled parson heard a tap at his door.

"Come in," he said gloomily, and in came the wedding parties, all wreathed in smiles.

"Well, minister," said the spokesman amiably, "we's been tarkin' an' tarkin' an' we's 'greed to mak' ta change!"

And the parson was mightily relieved. He did not understand how lightly matrimony sits upon the negro.

But that surely was nothing to the predicament of the lady who took her baby to be christened, and announced at the font in answer to the question, "How do you name this child?"

"Call de chile Beel-ze-bub."

"Oh, but that's not a proper name for a child," cried the horrified minister.

The proud mother looked at him doubtfully.

"But I get him outer de Bible."

"But I tell you it's a wicked name," asseverated the minister.

She sighed. All the trouble to be gone through again.

"Den, minister, what I call him?"

"Well, call him John if you want a Bible name. That's in the Bible."

Still the woman felt vaguely there was something wrong.

"You sure dat good name for him, minister"—very earnestly.

"Oh yes, quite sure," said the minister, anxious to put as far behind them as possible the dreadful scandal of Beelzebub.

So John the baby was christened, and the mother carried it outside and the minister came out and did the benevolent pastor to her and her friends.

"De chile's name am John," announced the mother.

"Hoo! John!" snorted a neighbour with more knowledge, "but amn't de piccaninny a gal?" And sure enough she was.

Leonie, being sent on a message, returned nonchalantly and empty-handed.

"But, Leonie, where's the parcel?" Leonie smiled non-committally.

"But, surely, if they didn't give you a parcel they gave you a letter?"

"Oh yes, missus," agreed Leonie readily, "dey give me a paper but he lose he's self on de way up." And of course there was no more to be said.

My wrath was as nothing to the wrath of a lady who wanted a pergola made exactly like one she had already that had been up for three or four years and was nicely covered with roses.

She took the negro carpenter and showed him the pergola, measured it under his eyes, gave him the measurements and the lumber, and left him to make

another on the other side of the house. Then, alas, she went away for the day. When she came back, to her horror and dismay she found her original pergola, all covered with its nicely-tended creepers—the work of years—had been taken down, stripped of its greenery, laid on the ground, and the thoughtful and careful carpenter was engaged in measuring it so as to make the new one exactly like it! What she said I don't know, but incidents like this help me to understand the punishments the slaves received of yore.

This same woman's husband happened to say casually to his carter that he would want him to go into Montego Bay, 16 miles away, the next day. Next day he found carter and team missing, and could only use bad language. They did not return till long after dark.

"Well, boss," said the driver cheerfully, "I been to Kerr's, an' I been to Hart's, an' I been to—" and he mentioned half a dozen places—"an' I wait an' wait, an' I wait, an' I go back an' dey none get nothen' for yous."

"Why, you fool," said his angry master, "you ought to have come to me, I had something I wanted you to take into town."

After all, the uneducated negro is not the only fool in the world, and though I laugh, I feel very kindly towards the sinners.

But, sometimes, their foolishness harmed themselves, though I am bound to say that was not their view of the case.

One of my neighbours, a very kindly American, being told by her boy that he wanted to go off early on Christmas Day, thoughtfully asked him if he would then rather have the money instead of the Christmas dinner. He considered a moment, and to her surprise elected to have the dinner.

On Christmas Day, immediately after the first breakfast, which is very early in the tropics—seldom after seven, often long before—she went into the kitchen to give her orders for the day, and there to her great surprise she saw her boy tucking into his Christmas dinner which the cook had cooked for him.

"Me eating it now, missus," he explained with a grin.

"But, Howard!" cried the lady, "how can you possibly eat your dinner immediately after breakfast?"

"Wanting a long day," he explained, and the explanation seemed to him perfectly natural.

His mistress knew that boy. There is a negro pudding made of grated coconut, coconut milk, corn-meal and sugar, baked. Not a bad pudding if a little is taken, but Howard one day got outside a large pie-dish full, and then came rubbing his stomach and groaning to his mistress.

"Why, Howard," she said a little severely, "I should think you did have indigestion. Why didn't you put half that pudding away till to-morrow?"

"Ah, missus," he said, "when he in dish, pudding hab two masters. Now——" No, words were unnecessary. He'd certainly got that pudding.

I suppose his case was on a par with that of the woman servant in the same place who, usually going barefoot, appeared on that same Christmas morning of 1920 in a pair of elaborate boots, very high-heeled and much too small for her. She could hardly totter when she came to wish her master and mistress a happy Christmas before setting out on her holiday. Her mistress said nothing. She had exhausted herself over Howard, but her husband, the old doctor, took it upon himself to remonstrate.

"Oh, Alice, how can you wear such boots!"

"O'ny for to-day, doctor," she said insinuatingly, "on'y jus' for to-day!" A long holiday meant for enjoyment, in boots too tight for her, with heels raised at least a couple of inches—imagine the agony of it.

But if the ignorant negro is foolish, his foolishness is as nothing sometimes to that of the white man who sets out to help and improve him.

Britain is not always wise in the Governors she chooses, though the Governor in a small community is a powerful means to good. There was one well-meaning man in an island that shall be nameless, who was certainly most desirous to help the black people, therefore it occurred to him one day to send a telegram to a rich planter of his acquaintance, asking him to come and see him as he had something of importance to discuss with him. Now, a request from a Governor is almost a royal command, but our planter knew his Governor. He was busy, and he did not there and then dash off and travel the many miles that lay between him and Government House. Still, since his estate was a long way off, he came at some inconvenience to himself.

And the first greetings over:

"You have the welfare of your people at heart, Mr —— ?"

"Surely, sir."

"I wanted to know—would you be prepared to put up a picture show?"

"On my place, sir?"

"Why, yes, of course, for the benefit of your hands."

"But—but—— I'm at least five-and-twenty miles from the port, and the port is at least six days from New York, and ——"

"Yes, of course, I know that."

"And where am I to get fresh pictures?"

The Governor looked attentive.

"They would come to the first show," explained the planter patiently, "and enjoy it, they would come to the second night, the third night they'd grumble, and after that they'd laugh at me for a fool."

"H'm—ha—h'm. Well, what about dancing? They're fond of dancing?"

"Of course."

"Would you put them up a dancing hall?"

"With a floor?"

"Of course."

And the planter sighed again for his wasted time, for everyone — except this Governor apparently — knows that the West Indian negro dances every night of his life very happily on the bare earth by the light of the stars or the moon! And I agree with the planter such exercise is a great deal more wholesome taken in the fresh air as the plantation hands are content to take it.

That planter went home an angry man, and he was met by his still more angry head man, who had taken his boots to be mended.

"Massa—massa—" he stammered furiously, "dat man—dat tief—boots no mended—he wearing dem. Massa—massa, can I have him up for breach of promise?"

But if anyone is really interested in peasant life in Jamaica he should read the books of Herbert de Lisser, C.M.G., whose country will some day be deeply grateful to him that he has—among other things he has done for her — portrayed to the life a type that is rapidly passing away.

Mr Harrison, the Custos of Manchester, tells me that the negro is becoming proud. It is the first step

upward. He will not always beg, however great his need. He will not if he can help it acknowledge his poverty. He told me how upon one of his sugar estates he found that for some time the cook he had engaged to cook for the working women, who were supposed to provide the material for breakfast, had nothing to do. The women had no food to be cooked. But they never complained, hungry they quietly went to work. He therefore instructed his "busha" to supply yams or plantains or cocos and coconut oil sufficient for a good breakfast for each woman. They accepted it gratefully, and they did a far better day's work afterwards. This same gentleman told me how the little children are like their parents, becoming proud and self-respecting. They are very poor in that parish where a former wasteful generation has denuded the mountains of trees to grow coffee, and so interfered with the rainfall—but do you think the children are going to acknowledge their poverty? Oh, they have taken their dinners to school, and if you doubt it, they hold up their little tin pails proudly. Not for worlds would they take off the cover and show that inside is that most uninteresting of all foods, cold boiled yam and not, I am afraid, sometimes enough of that.

No one will ever taunt such women and children with being servile. Never!

As I write this, I come across an extract from an old writer on the negro slave which is worth quoting, the contrast is so great.

"Negroes," he says, "are crafty, artful, plausible, not often grateful for small services, deceitful, over-reaching . . . they are avaricious and selfish, giving all the plague they can to their white rulers, little ashamed of falsehood and even strongly addicted to theft." But still even he admits "he has some

good qualities mingled with his unamiable ones. He is patient, cheerful and commonly submissive, capable at times of grateful attachments where uniformly well treated, and kind and affectionate towards his kindred and offspring." And he goes on to say how tender are the negro mothers. In fact, even he had to acknowledge that the great bulk of the negroes were beyond the master's observation, and we of later date can see for ourselves that the faults he complains of are not peculiar to negroes, but are the common faults of the slave.

As yet, however, the man of African race is often something of a slavish imitator of things European. He struts and boasts of his progress exactly as children do. After all, he has had such a toilsome way to climb since Britain bestowed upon him freedom and poverty, is it to be wondered at if occasionally he has gone a little astray.

A little while ago the Hon. Marcus Garvey visited Jamaica, and black Jamaica celebrated his arrival by a full page advertisement in the *Gleaner* with a very large picture—a little smeared in the printing—of the gentleman in question, the most noticeable feature of which was his large expanse of white waistcoat.

"BIG MEETINGS & CONCERTS" (announced the advertisement in largest type) "ARRANGED ALL OVER THE ISLAND TO HEAR HON. MARCUS GARVEY. Elected Provisional President of Africa, President General of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and" (oh bathos!) "President of the Black Star Line Steamship Corporation.

"He will be in Jamaica nine days and will speak as follows——"

And then a list is given of the places at which he

will speak, and the subjects on which he will speak, and it also announces that as President General of his Association he will appear on these nights in his robes of office.

At the bottom of the page it says in large type that Marcus Garvey was elected by twenty-five thousand delegates to the World Convention of Negroes in New York last summer as the First Provisional President of Africa.

This is delicious! I don't want to laugh at the black man, but I think it's a serious clog on his upward career to elect Presidents in this casual manner. I have seen the only attempt at modern civilised government in Africa by the black man, and I can only condemn it as a dismal failure, why, then, should the men of negro descent take upon themselves to elect for the negroes in Africa a President without a with or by your leave. It is really much as if the Americans in New York decided to elect a President General of Europe or Asia without reference to the feelings of the peoples of those continents. Of course, it may be merely a term of endearment—if so, I have nothing to say against it. Everybody to their taste. President of the Negro Improvement Association is quite another matter. We all wish that society well, so well we would not have it weakened by any comic opera blandishments, and President of the Black Star Line is quite legitimate, even though it is a little—well—just a little consequential, for the "Black Star Line" is composed as yet of but one steamer, the *Yarmouth*, under 1000 tons. The first time she came into Kingston harbour, black Kingston went hysterical with delight. That a ship should sail with a black captain, and manned by a black crew, seemed to it an amazing thing. When the dark man makes a

fuss over a ship run by his own people, he is saying in effect—"We are children as yet, but you see we are growing up. We are coming into our own."

It seems to me the negro's great fault is that he is bombastic and claims too much. Marcus Garvey and his crowd are I suppose the natural reaction from the years of ghastly slavery, when a black man could not even own himself. Of course we only notice those who come strutting ridiculously before the footlights. I know there is many and many a negro as decent, upright, and self-respecting a man as his white confrère, but the trouble is we do not notice him beside his more boastful brother.

That the negro does want his interests looking after I have not the slightest doubt. Our servants used to come to Eva who was clever with her needle to cut out their clothes for them, and it was wicked to see the stuff which those poor girls, whose pay was only 6s. and 7s. a week, used to buy at ridiculously high prices. I have seen 1s. 6d. and 1s. 9d. a yard paid for unbleached calico that could not possibly have cost the seller 1½d. a yard. And it had been bought at a negro shop, they were, in fact, imposed upon by men of their race.

How these things are to be corrected I know not. Education I suppose, and education we must remember is not the mere teaching of reading and writing. I am sorry to say I doubt sometimes if the authorities in Jamaica are giving the Jamaican the best education that they can.

"Dear Mrs —— is so good." That is, good for the negroes. They wouldn't even ask her to dinner because she is not amusing. They would laugh very much at the idea of themselves subscribing to her standards of life.

No wonder we get inflated gentlemen proclaiming themselves "Provisional President of Africa!"

For the negro is capable of better things. It is a great shame that certain of his numbers should make him a laughing-stock.

When first the idea of contingents of West Indian soldiers for the World War was mooted, there was opposition. It would be such a bad thing for the negro, it would give him an extravagant idea of his own value, the country on the return of its soldiers might look forward to discontent in a certain section, might even fear outrage and rapine.

But I think the contrary has been the case. Exceptions of course there must have been. I should not like to set out to count the exceptions among the white returned soldiers, but the average Jamaican soldier settled down quietly to his work in his own country, worked all the better because he had been counted a citizen of the Empire, was proud that his thews and sinews had helped mightily in the great struggle, was glad to be received at last on equal terms by men of the colour that so long had held him in bondage.

I hold, and hold very strongly, that the very first step in the upraising of either a man or a people is the cultivation of proper pride.

Read this letter I received from a doctor in the Cameroons during the war—

"Certainly the wickedest three hours," he wrote concerning a night attack up country, "I ever put in." We could not guess the range in the cloudy moonlight. The Germans held a hill, we had not a scrap of cover, the breast-high grass prevented charging, and also made the men stand up to shoot. By 6·30 A.M. the Germans cleared out precipitately, leaving us in possession of a very good camp.

"The men were splendid. Tmoru Calfa, a sergeant-major, shot through the spine high up, lay down by his section and controlled their fire. He died next day. His was only one instance of their conduct."

When the Great Roll is called, not among the least surely will be found the name of that sergeant, pagan from the north of the Gold Coast, who, being shot high up in the spine, lay down beside his men, controlled their firing and died next day. Not the Unknown Warrior buried in Westminster Abbey could have done more.

Which man will the negro race in future years think upon more gladly as its representative, Marcus Garvey or Tmoru Calfa?

The coming of the negro race to the New World marks a most extraordinary phase in the world's history. They came unwillingly as slaves, and as slaves they were held with all the ignominy inseparable from that condition. Of the race in America I know nothing save what little I have seen in the streets of New Orleans, where they seem as far apart from the ruling race as the mountain tops in Jamaica are from the river-beds. But in Jamaica, whatever there may have been in the old days, there is now no such cleft. There is, of course, a difference, but it is a difference that is passing, that will pass as the years go on and the dark man fits himself to take his place in the world as the social equal of the white.

Already he sits in the Legislature. He has come a long, long way up from the chained savage brought in the slave ships. I hope that if a dark man reads this book he will not think unkindly of me for writing as if there were a difference between black and white. There is, it would be foolish to

ignore it, but it is only the difference of education and training. We must remember that in past ages the Anglo-Saxon stood in the market-place in Rome chained and in slavery, that blue eyes and flaxen hair marked the savage, and dark complexion and black eyes the civilised man. The time of servitude of the black man is a little closer. He has to come up the same stony path that the white man trod, and he will do it more easily and more quickly—he is doing it—because the white man has prepared the way.

And I say that deliberately, knowing all the hardships that the white man has inflicted, for when I talk of the time of servitude of the blacks in the West Indies, you, my readers, will do me the justice to own that I have by no means glossed over the crudities and the foolishness and the brutality of men of my own colour. But the world is changing, changing fast. It is a better place to live in in this twentieth century, it will be a better place still as the years roll on, and the black man like the white will come into his own.

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